University of Alberta

THE MULTILATERAL MIRAGE:

A POST-COLD WAR EXAMINATION OF US SECURITY POLICY

LUKE MANCA ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts

Department of Political Science

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 2005

0-494-09048-0

Library and Archives Canada

Published Heritage Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

Direction du Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN:
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN:

NOTICE:
The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:
L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

In loving memory of Grandpa Bob

- your winger

Abstract

Since the warming of Cold War tensions, American security policy has undergone a slow, yet relentless move toward unilateralism. Many academics have erroneously attributed the shift solely to the current Bush administration's policy ideals. Instead, my contention is that the decidedly unilateral shift in American security policy has been underway since the end of the Cold War, growing increasingly unilateral with each successive administration; starting with the predominately multilateral administration of George H.W. Bush, turning to an ambiguous multilateralism of William Clinton, and culminating with a frank unilateralism currently employed by George W. Bush. While the multilateral/unilateral question has a historical context in the United States, various structural factors – America's hegemonic position, perceived international security challenges, domestic institutional structure, changing conceptualization of multilateralism, and exceptionalism – not only explain the current tendency, but also provide insight in how the US might conduct its foreign policy in the world in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In keeping with the academic tradition, I have divided my acknowledgements into three.

Firstly, the educators. I would like to express my profound debt of gratitude to Professor Tom Keating – both a scholar and a gentleman. Not only has he provided invaluable assistance over the last number of years – the culmination of which can be found in these following pages – but his devotion to both his family, his career, and his students set lofty goals not only for his fellow educators (to which few follow) but also to the students he teaches. While we may not have always agreed politically, it was his knowledge, his patience, his sense of humor and his love of "literature" that made our lively discussions so profitable. Thanks to Leon Craig, an educator who could raise me about my insufficiencies, and teach me again to be *simple* and *honest* in thought and life. Many thanks also to Morris Maduro, a man who has instilled a great deal of trust and confidence in me; expectations I hope to live up to.

Secondly, I would like to thank my family and friends. To my immediate family – my mother Kim, father Tom, and sister Karley – all of whom have provided steadfast love, support and encouragement throughout, I will always be indebted. I would like to thank my friend Elizabeth Oliver who has not only provided an admirable sparring partner in our countless disagreements, but an intelligent and insightful colleague (even if still deluded by her naïve idealism). Finally to my best friend, Sean Corbett. For the countless hours of discussions and debates (on things both high and low) for his frank honesty, dry wit, brilliant mind, and for his years of friendship and loyalty, I offer my sincerest gratitude.

Lastly, to my love, Sharla Carlyle, who has spent the last five and a half years putting up with my political musings at social functions, family get-togethers, and on dates. For her unwavering support and encouragement, her high expectations, and her endless loving nature, I will be eternally grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

Current Scholarship 5

Methodology 11

SECTION I: MULTILATERALISM 13

Definitions 14

Expressions 19

International Treaties & Arrangements

International Institutions

International Norms

SECTION II: POST-COLD WAR ADMINISTRATIONS 27

GEORGE H.W. BUSH 28

WILLIAM J. CLINTON 48

GEORGE W. BUSH 71

SECTION III: UNDERLYING FACTORS 94

America's Power Gap 95

The Structural Threat 102

Multilateralism's Changing Nature 108

Decentralized Domestic Structure 117

Exceptionalism as Political Culture 122

CONCLUSIONS 128

Bibliography 135

Introduction

In the months leading up to the second invasion of Iraq, and even more extensively after the invasion, states making up the "international community" condemned the "unilateral" actions of George W. Bush. French President Jacques Chirac, a leading critic of US foreign policy, was especially vocal, denouncing what he believed to be an expression of the "new American unilateralism."[1] Addressing the UN General Assembly, Chirac condemned the US war for ignoring a UN Security Council Resolution claiming American actions "undermined the multilateral system." "In an open world," President Chirac stated, "no one can live in isolation, no one can act alone in the name of all, and no one can accept the anarchy of a society without rules."[2] In response to questions about his apparent lack of concern for achieving a multilateral response to the Iraqi problem, President George W. Bush bluntly retorted: "When it comes to our security, we really don't need anybody's permission."[3]

---

[1] Chirac as cited in Milbank, "Bush Criticized Over Iraq," A1, A24.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Bush as cited in Balz, "President puts onus back on Iraqi Leader," A1.

The intervention in Iraq renewed contemporary international debates regarding how the US should conduct itself in the world. Over the last number of years, American foreign policy appears to have become distinctly unilateral. In fact, since the initial election of President George W. Bush, Europe has been highly critical of the neoconservative administration's sharp shift toward unilateralism.[4] "Since the advent of the Bush Administration, European observers and governments have been concerned that U.S. respect for alliances, international law, cooperation and organizations was being displaced by reliance on overwhelming U.S. military force."[5] In addition to the Americans' handling of the Iraqi situation, many critics point to the US' rejection of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, its refusal to sign either the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court or the Anti-Personnel Mines Treaty, and its decision to completely withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, to support claims of a renewed American reliance upon unilateralism. Appearances, however, can be deceiving.

Increasingly, academics have noted the stark contrast between the current President and his predecessors, leaving some scholars to "call the diplomatic operating principles of the Bush presidency a 'revolution.'"[6] Richard Holbrooke, former US ambassador to the United Nations, for instance, has argued that the Bush administration threatens "a radical break with 55 years of bipartisan tradition that sought international agreements and regimes of benefits to us."[7] In fact, much of the empirical evidence would appear to support the claims of Mr. Holbrooke. Not only has the US increasingly retreated from the practice of multilateralism and embraced unilateralism, but the unilateralism in which President Bush has engaged is fundamentally different from that of his predecessors – the unilateralism of President G.W. Bush has been much more consistent, more unapologetic, and more assertive than at any time in recent US history. However, one must ask whether the election of George W. Bush

---

[4] Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 73.
[5] Sloan, "U.S. Hegemony and Transatlantic Alliance," 21-22.
[6] Sestanovich, "American Maximalism," 13.
[7] Holbrooke as cited in Krauthammer, "The New Unilateralism," A29.

represents a dramatic departure from the multilateral postwar order that America was so instrumental in creating?

While the election of George W. Bush has certainly re-ignited the discussion over how the United States should conduct itself in international relations, the debate over the unilateralism and multilateralism certainly did not originate with the election of the 43rd president. Since America's inception, and at various times in the republic's history, the issues of whether the US should engage itself in world affairs or isolate itself completely, should act with other states or go it alone, has dominated the foreign policy dialogue. At certain times in its history, the United States have taken the multilateralist path, "claim[ing] to abjure power and assail[ing] as atavistic the power politics of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European empires,"[8] choosing instead to rely upon international law and international institutions to maintain peace and stability in the international system. At other times the US has ridiculed international law and institutions and become less patient with policies of diplomacy and persuasion, instead choosing a path reliant upon on power politics and brute force to regulate the behavior of states.

Which path the United States chooses at any point in history depends upon various structural factors, and while this author is certainly cognizant of the historical context and recognizes the fact that it could have gone back further to examine and analyze trends in foreign policy, I have instead chosen to deal with the contemporary period and analyze the factors that have shaped current US security policy. While many academics, including John Lewis Gaddis and Walter Russell Mead, have identified both the historical shifts and factors that contributed to those shifts,[9] the end of the Cold War has signaled the emergence of a number of new factors that are worth serious consideration. The five underlying factors that have affected contemporary US commitments toward

---

[8] Kagan, Of Paradise and Power, 9.

[9] See for instance John Lewis Gaddis' *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947*; *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security*; *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War*; *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience;* and Walter Russell Mead's *Power, Terror, Peace, and War: America's Grand Strategy in a World at Risk*; *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World.*

multilateralism, and those which this essay will examine later in this paper are as follows: America's power gap, the structural threat, multilateralism's changing nature, the US' decentralized domestic structure, and exceptionalism as political culture.

The post-Cold War era provides a logical place to begin any contemporary analysis on the multilateral/unilateral dichotomy, as the fall of the Soviet Union was instrumental in causing the recent shift from multilateralism to unilateralism. While numerous academics have condemned the current administration for ignoring repeated calls to reintegrate into the "international community" and to define American interests according to "international rules and frameworks of cooperation"[10] rather than military and economic might, many of these international spectators, pundits and academics have neglected to analyze the current events in context prior to adopting such opinions. While the reasons these scholars have ignored such crucial information is outside the parameters of this essay, an assessment of US security policy that spans the entire post-Cold War era, offering a survey of all three presidential administrations, the US' record with respect to the multilateral/unilateral dichotomy is an essential component of this paper. Comparing the three administrations, in fact, seems to be the only logical method to determine if, in fact, the current administration's actions "represent a major turn away from the long postwar tradition of multilateralism in American foreign policy," or if Bush's policy is simply the logical culmination of a slow and progressive shift toward unilateralism that has been underway since the fall of the Soviet empire.

The central objective of this thesis is to assess the United States' multilateral and unilateral commitments since the inception of the post-Cold War era; specifically, I will focus on the level of commitment exhibited by the US executive with respect to security policy. The main argument that this paper advances is that the shift toward unilateralism has not been a recent development, as other academics would argue. Rather, this shift toward post-Cold War unilateralism has been neither sudden, nor unexpected. In actuality, "In every

[10] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 1.

historical era, the United States has shown a willingness to reject treaties, violate rules, ignore allies, and use military force on its own."[11] Moreover, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world has witnessed a gradual, yet consistent move toward unilateralism, and a subsequent retreat from multilateralism in US security policy. In fact, references to multilateralism in the post-Cold War context may be more mirage than fact. Beginning with former President George H.W. Bush and moving to the current President George W. Bush, much of the empirical data suggests there has been a linear progression toward substantive unilateralism; from a nuanced unilateralism confined to the procedural variant under Bush (Sr.), to Clinton's ambiguous unilateralism, mixed with both procedural and substantive variants, to an assertive doctrine of substantive unilateralism with the current President Bush. The examination of the three US post-Cold War administrations with respect to their actions regarding international treaties, international organizations, and international norms does more than provide a comprehensive and consistent framework within which to work; it allows for more careful consideration of not only where the US embraces both multilateralism and unilateralism, but also what version of these doctrines as well.

Current Scholarship

Public confusion surrounding the US' recent unwillingness to define its interests in terms of international laws, institutions, or norms is not entirely surprising. While international institutions, a specific form of multilateralism, have been given extensive academic study, discussion, and analysis, the study of multilateralism, itself, has largely been neglected within the international relations literature, and subsequently little attention within the United States. "The volumes written on international institutions have focused both on the characteristics and operations of the organizations and the factors that have supported their establishment and maintenance."[12] While the American

---

[11] Schlesginger, "Unilateralism in Historical Perspective," 18-29.
[12] Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 4.

literature has been relatively unconcerned with multilateralism – a fact not entirely unexpected based on its hegemonic status, military, and economic influence around the world – a number of academics have laid the theoretical foundations in the study of multilateralism.

For almost forty-five years after the cessation of the Second World War, the study of international relations in the United States have been preoccupied with the factors that contributed to, and the strategies that ultimately ended, the Cold War. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, scholarly focus on the Cold War slowly began to erode, resulting in an expansion of the topics of study in the discipline of international relations. The reemergence of multilateralism has been born out of this line of thinking, with Robert Keohane one of the central scholars associated with the revitalization of the theoretical multilateral debate.

In his essay, "Multilateralism: An Agenda for Research," Keohane signified the beginning of a conceptual re-focus within the international relations literature. Keohane made three important arguments with important implications for how academics would conceive of multilateralism. Firstly, Keohane argued in favor of a quantitative definition of the concept, stating that "multilateralism can be defined as the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions."[13] Secondly, Keohane observed that the use of the term "multilateralism" has served more "as a label for a variety of activities" than as a stand alone "concept of defining a research programme."[14] Simply put, there was more focus on variants of multilateralism than on the theoretical concept that linked them all together. Finally, Keohane argued for a limited scope in understanding multilateralism, and thus "deliberately" restricted the term to arrangements involving only states.[15]

While Keohane's essay proved important in initiating the discussion on multilateralism, it was John Gerald Ruggie's contribution that has had one of the most profound influences on the current theoretical discussions regarding multilateralism. In his seminal work "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an

---

[13] Keohane, "Multilateralism: An Agenda for Research," 731.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., 732

Institution," Ruggie took the purely nominal, procedural definition that Keohane had advanced and argued that, in order to understand the phenomenon of multilateralism, a more substantive, qualitative dimension should be added. "What is distinctive about multilateralism," Ruggie argued, "is not merely that it coordinates national politics in groups of three or more states…but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states."[16] Essentially, Ruggie argued for a re-conceptualized definition of multilateralism, thereby fundamentally challenging how scholars think about, debate, and understand the concept of multilateralism. Under Ruggie's guidance, multilateralism becomes something more than satisfying numbers; it ultimately requires satisfying normative criteria as well. As Tom Keating notes about Ruggie's definition:

> when viewed from this vantage point, a commitment to multilateralism involves more than a procedural strategy for conducting one's foreign policy. It suggests a subjective approach and a conscious commitment to the process and substance of the associations – more specifically, a conscious interest in the substantive content of the international order that is supported by multilateral activity.[17]

After having laid the pivotal theoretical underpinnings, a number of scholars have applied the theories provided by Ruggie and/or Keohane in hopes of explaining the foreign policy of the United States. G. John Ikenberry, in his work "Is American Multilateralism in Decline?", utilizes Keohane's qualitative definition of multilateralism, contending that the US' commitment toward multilateralism has remained remarkably strong in the post-Cold War era; "between 1970 and 1997, the number of international treaties more than tripled; and from 1985 through 1999 alone, the number of international institutions [the US committed to] increased by two-thirds."[18] Ikenberry concludes that, while there have been recent instances of unilateralism in American foreign policy, "there is little or no evidence that ordering multilateralism is eroding or under

---

[16] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 567.
[17] Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 4.
[18] Ikenberry, "American Multilateralism in Decline?," 537.

attack."[19] This assertion, however, is predicated on a number of weaknesses. Definitional problems, an abbreviated and expedient analysis of the various forms of multilateralism, and an unwillingness to examine the central question – namely, whether or not the US has turned away from multilateralism – all contribute to an analysis that leaves readers with more questions than answers regarding the US' commitment to multilateralism.

John Ikenberry has not been the only scholar addressing the question of whether it is politically prudent for the US to act alone or with others. Joseph S. Nye, in "Seven Tests Between Concert and Unilateralism," spends the majority of his time on answering – how America *should* engage the world? While noting the shift toward multilateralism after the September 11[th] attacks, Nye argues that the US must maintain a "general preference for multilateralism."[20] However, while Nye favors an America pre-disposed to multilateralism, he argues that this predisposition should not be unconditional and that, at certain times, it is within America's interests to act unilaterally. As a result, Nye highlights seven tests that must be conducted when deciding whether to act multilateral or unilaterally.[21]

John Van Oudenaren, on the other hand, takes a different approach to American multilateralism. Instead of arguing for a distinctly multilateral or unilateral foreign policy, Van Oudenaren attempts to analyze whether or not the post-Cold War, from multilateralism to unilateralism, has been the consequence of the unipolar position in which it found itself with the conclusion of the Cold War. Instead of identifying and analyzing the numerous factors that may have caused such a shift, Van Oudenaren simply focuses on debunking one, arguing

---

[19] Ibid., 544.
[20] Nye, "Seven Tests," 13.
[21] Firstly, unilateralism should not be ruled out "in cases that involve vital survival interest;" secondly, the US "should be cautious about multilateral arrangements that interfere with [the US'] ability to produce stable peace in volatile areas;" thirdly, "unilateral tactics sometimes help lead others to compromises that advance multilateral interests;" fourth "the United States should reject multilateral initiatives that are recipes for inaction, that cater disproportionately to the self-interest of others, or that are contrary to [US] values;" fifth, "multilateralism is essential on intrinsically cooperative issues that cannot be managed by the United States without the help of other countries;" sixth, "multilateralism should be sought as a means to get others to share the burden and buy into the idea of providing public goods;" and finally, "in choosing between multilateral and unilateral tactics, we must consider the effects of the decision on [America's] soft or attractive power," as listed in Nye, "Seven Tests," 10-12. [22] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 72.

"the evidence does not support the view that American unilateralism is the result of a unipolar imbalance of power and that a return to multipolarity is a necessary or sufficient condition for creating a stronger multilateral order."[22]

The common link between these authors – Ikenberry, Nye, and Van Oudenaren – is that they all take as a given the fact the US has become increasingly willing to use unilateralism as opposed to multilateralism. In doing so, these scholars fail to recognize and draw attention to the critical disagreements over multilateralism that, in the end, must be reconciled. Is unilateralism the passing fad that Ikenberry deems it, or has it, as Van Oudenaren argues, become an entrenched fixture of the US foreign policy?[23] Discrepancies also exist over when this shift took place. Did the substantial move toward unilateralism begin during the second administration of William Clinton,[24] or was it with the initial election of George W. Bush?[25] These inconsistencies have largely been ignored by academics, who have been in a rush to answer the more exciting and profitable questions – "how American *should* engage the world,"[26] or "about when, if ever, unilateral action is acceptable,"[27] or "what [are] the consequences of perceived U.S. unilateralism?"[28] – instead of the fundamental question: "What, exactly, made American action in Iraq "unilateral?",[29] a question on which all subsequent questions and analysis depends.

While this essay should in no way be considered a comprehensive exploration of the balance between unilateralism and multilateralism in post-Cold War US security policy, it does attempt to fill the current gap in the literature, offering a contemporary examination spanning the administrations of the entire post-Cold War era in an effort to determine whether or not there has been a trend toward or away from unilateralism, and what has caused that shift. While the concentration of this essay is neither unique in the questions it asks, nor the

---

[22] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 72.
[23] Van Oudenaren, "What Is 'Multilateral'?," 33-47.
[24] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 71
[25] Nye, "Seven Tests," 5-13.
[26] Ibid., 5.
[27] Van Oudenaren, "What Is 'Multilateral'?," 34.
[28] Malone and Khong, "Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 3.
[29] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 145.

general conclusions it draws – both of which have been presented in other works[30] – there are a number of factors which separate this from other already significant works. These factors include the expansion of the historical scope, the inclusion of both forms of multilateralism, and a differing perspective than most of those who have written on US foreign policy.

While some of the most recent works have focused on the current Bush administration alone, or compared it with the previous Clinton administration, this essay will broaden the historical period, looking at all three post-Cold War presidents. One reason to concentrate on the contemporary post-Cold War era is that it provides a degree of policy relevance for the current, and future, administrations.[31] The second benefit of focusing the analysis on the entire post-Cold War era, instead of one or two segments, is that it allows for the detection of a more comprehensive foreign policy trend that authors, such as Ikenberry – who omit one-third of the post-Cold War era administrations – simply cannot provide.

A second difference offered herein is a comprehensive, focused, and consistent approach to examining US security policy in the context of unilateralism/multilateralism engagement. Authors, such as Ikenberry, have confined themselves to one definition of multilateralism (either quantitative or qualitative) and examined the data in terms of either the former or the latter but rarely both. This work, on the other hand, utilizes both definitions in analyzing the actions of the US executive, along a number of forms (international treaties, international organizations, norms) that could be expressed in either a multilateral or unilateral form. Since there are two important ways of understanding both unilateralism and multilateralism as concepts, and numerous different expressions that both can exhibit, confining an assessment to one definition (procedural) and one sole expression (international organizations), as done by Keohane, may render less valid the conclusions drawn. In order to truly understand both multilateralism and unilateralism in the context of US security policy, and to draw substantive conclusions thereof, using both procedural and substantive variants of

---

[30] See for example Nye, "Seven Tests;" Patrick and Forman, *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy*; and Malone and Khong, *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy*.
[31] Malone and Khong, "Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 2.

multilateralism and applying them in a variety of forms, including international treaties, organizations, and norms, can help provide a comprehensive account and analysis of US foreign policy.

A final distinguishing character of this study is its ability to provide an outsider's perspective by an individual whose country is consumed by the multilateral phenomenon – Canada. Multilateralism is a defining characteristic of Canadian foreign policy, but for Americans, it appears to be an anomaly, quite natural based on its circumstances – its international power status, military-industrial complex, and its economic and cultural influence around the world. With the study of international relations largely dominated by American scholars, the concept of multilateralism has been largely neglected, with those writing about American foreign policy in this context having a difficult time separating themselves from the material, particularly since they live, work, and study within the US. As a result, this paper should be a more objective and less ideologically driven. As one can plainly see, there is a gap within the current academic literature today with respect to the America's post-Cold War commitment to the institutions of both multilateralism and unilateralism, a gap this thesis hopes to fill.

Methodology

Section one of this essay will explore the definition of both multilateralism and unilateralism, considering both the evolution of their uses and their varying meanings.[32] Since both concepts are comprised of both formal and substantive elements, addressing these two aspects will prove invaluable in assessing the actual character of each post Cold War presidency. Aside from establishing a working definition for both multilateralism and unilateralism, section one will also survey three expressions or dimensions of the two concepts (multilateralism and unilateralism). This ultimately serves two purposes: firstly, it provides consistency in how this paper examines US behavior; secondly, it also puts forward a methodology (establishes a criteria) to help determine

[32] Powell, "In Defence of Multilateralism."

whether or not diplomatic trends exist.

Section two examines US security policy in the post-Cold War era, analyzing America's commitment to multilateralism and unilateralism in three different contexts – treaties, institutions, and norms. This second section is divided into three, focusing on the three US presidents since 1988 – President Bush (Sr.) 1988-1992, President Clinton 1992-2000, and President Bush (Jr.) 2000-Present. For each president, their historical record is examined and their commitments to both multilateralism and unilateralism are analyzed briefly. From this assessment, this section formulates the hypothesis that since the end of the Cold War there has been an almost linear, progressive shift toward unilateralism, a shift that has become more substantive with each successive president.

This paper will conclude with the final section focusing on a careful explanation of this slow, yet relentless, move towards unilateralism. This section will address five of the most significant factors that have influence US security policy in the post-Cold War era, including the US' global dominance, perceived international challenges to US security, its domestic political structure, the changing nature of the institution of multilateralism, and America's unique political culture. Since many of the factors are not exclusive to the current historical period, it will be necessary, on occasion, to refer to earlier historical periods in order to fully explain and determine the effect it produced.

Before this paper begins its analysis, however, there are a number of considerations that must be made clear at the onset. As previously mentioned, this paper focuses on US security policy – only one of many elements that comprise US foreign policy – and the US executive – only one of the decision-making political bodies. The reasons for doing so are primarily academic. One argument against confining the study to just one foreign policy area or one decision-making body is that by doing so the data that one can consider is limited, leaving the assessment and subsequent analysis weakened, and leading to the possibility of a less rigorous conclusion. While expanding the relevant policy areas may, on the one hand, provide more empirical data on which to base conclusions, on the other hand, it also allows the author to be more subjective in

choosing empirical data. Broadening what is relevant in terms of policy increases the likelihood that a writer will "pick and choose" those actions that lend themselves better to the proposed thesis. Consequently, conclusions drawn may be tainted, and the thesis, therefore, inconclusive. Secondly, by limiting the area of analysis to US security policy alone, attempts to explain the phenomena will neither be confused nor conflated with factors that have little relevance. Simply put, factors that contribute to unilateralism in economic issues may have little value toward explaining unilateralism in security policy and vice versa. Thus, while this paper deals specifically with these doctrines only in terms of security issues, this is not to suggest that the same trends necessarily take place in other areas of US foreign policy, nor does it suggest that the same factors provide an equally sufficient understanding of those possible trends. While this may be the case, any correlation is strictly incidental.

SECTION I

Before this essay begins an examination and explanation of the US policy during the post-Cold War era, it will prove constructive to define what exactly is meant by the concepts multilateralism and unilateralism. While the two terms are often considered commonsensical, requiring no further elaboration, due to overuse in the literature, the concepts themselves have certainly become less self-evident than often assumed. Since the primary goal of this paper is to ascertain the general character of American foreign policy and determine the factors that dictate the particular foreign policy, devising criteria for understanding what constitutes either a multilateral or unilateral action will prove invaluable. Thus, this first section will define the terms "unilateralism" and "multilateralism," investigating not only linguistic considerations, but what each term is composed of, and ultimately what differentiates and distinguishes the opposing strategic orientations. From this analysis what will become clear is that both terms are comprised of two distinct halves; the first being a more superficial, quantitative part, and the second made up of the more substantive or qualitative component.

In hopes of understanding US security policy, therefore, this paper will look at three expressions – treaties/arrangements, institutions, and norms – that have the potential to be either multilateral or unilateral in nature, in an effort to determine not only whether US actions were multilateral, but also whether the concern was numbers, norms, or both.

Definitions

The overuse of the terms "multilateralism" and "unilateralism" in the media, academia, and in common dialogues has the potential to render both terms impotent. Anytime there is cooperation in international relations, pundits refer to the "multilateral" character of the state; anytime states are uncooperative, critics decry claims of arrogant "unilateralist." While all multilateral action is cooperative, not all cooperation is multilateral, with the same being true for unilateralism. In fact, it may be this lack of clarity surrounding the understanding of such phenomena that could be symptomatic of the larger transatlantic debate between those who view multilateralism as the "*modus operandi*"[33] in world politics and those who regard it as but an instrument of international politics, "useful only insofar as they advance [a state's] own narrow interests.[34]

Is multilateralism (and for that matter unilateralism) an instrument used by states in some search for a particular national objective? Or is multilateralism an expression, a way of integrating a state into the international system and interacting with other states? Simply put, do these terms refer simply to a state of affairs or to something of deeper significance implied in the definitions? One of the reasons no internally agreed upon definition has yet been constructed may be traced to differing interpretations of not only what multilateralism and unilateralism are, but also of what precisely each entails.

John Ruggie, in his seminal essay, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," notes some linguistic considerations that may be of importance in

---

[33] See for instance Powell, "In Defense of Multilateralism."
[34] Malone, "A Decade of U.S. Unilateralism?," 21.

attempting to answer conceptual questions regarding the exact composition/consistency of the two institutions.[35] "Multilateralism," and its all its variants, have become so interchangeable within academic literature, their meaning – not to mention the fact that they are two distinctive grammatical forms – has gone largely unnoticed by the vast majority who employ the terms.

As James Caporaso notes, "there is a distinction between multilateral institutions and the institution of multilateralism."[36] "Multilateralism" and "unilateralism" are both nouns, and both contain the suffix "*ism,*" presuming "a belief or ideology rather than a straightforward state of affairs."[37] Multilateral, unilateral, and bilateral are all adjectives, all used to modify the noun. As such, the term "multilateral" can refer to any number of things, but is often used in conjunction "to an organizing principle, an organization, or a simple activity."[38] Multilateral institutions refer specifically to formal organizations, with permanent headquarters and fixed address; the institution of multilateralism may manifest itself in this concrete form, but is not limited thusly. It is with this in mind that this paper will focus on multilateralism as an institution, viewing it comprehensively, and not focusing specifically on any one variant.

That being stated, this essay can now put forward formal definitions of both ideologies to be utilized henceforth. Multilateralism, for the purposes of this essay, is defined as the "coordination of relations among three or more states on the basis of generalized principles of conduct."[39] The definition is comprised of two distinct but necessary elements – a quantitative and a qualitative. Robert Keohane provides the former in his work "Multilateralism: An Agenda for Research." In this work, Keohane argues that multilateralism is merely comprised of "the practice of coordinating the national policies in groups of three or more states."[40] While the nominal definition may suit some purposes, "it poses the problem of subsuming institutional forms that traditionally have been viewed

---

[35] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 14.
[36] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 54.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 12-14.
[40] Keohane, "Multilateralism: An Agenda for Research," 731.

as being expressions of bilateralism, not multilateralism."[41] Neither the League of the Three Emperors, nor the Bismarckian alliance system, nor the Comintern, while all multilateral in the sense that relations were coordinated among three or more states, could conceivably be considered as an example of the spirit of multilateralism. Therefore, there must be at least one other variable in addition to simple numbers employed to determine the composition of multilateralism.

"There is an older diplomatic tradition that regards multilateralism more as a matter of norms than of sheer numbers."[42] While the numbers of states cooperating is integral to the process, the qualitative element is truly what distinguishes reality from mere appearance; as Diebold suggested, "the issue is not the number of parties so much…as the *kind of relations* that are instituted among them"[43] (emphasis in original). The next logical question then becomes what kind of relations comprise multilateralism? This "organizing principle", that Ruggie claims differentiates multilateralism from unilateralism, is distinguished by three properties – indivisibility, general principles of conduct, and diffuse reciprocity.[44]

Indivisibility, according to Caporaso, "can be thought of as the scope (both geographic and functional) over which costs and benefits are spread, given an action initiated in or among component units."[45] Multilateralism does not divide or separate issues on a case-by-case basis, but uses multilateral means in every issue. Sometimes the state will win, sometimes it will loose, but over the long term both the state and the global interests will benefit from using multilateralism each and every time. Multilateralists are concerned not so much with the present as with the future benefits.

General principles of conduct represent the second multilateral variable, and "usually come in the form of norms exhorting general if not universal modes of relating to other states, rather than differentiating relations case-by-case on the basis of individual preferences, situational exigencies, or a priori particularistic

---

[41] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 6.
[42] Van Oudenaren, "What is 'Multilateralism?," 35.
[43] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 6.
[44] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 53.
[45] Ibid., 53-54.

grounds."[46] One example of such was the establishment of an international order based on collective security. Norms of nonaggression, uniform rules – and application of those rules for use of sanctions to either deter or punish aggression – and the collectively sanctioned procedures for the implementation of these decisions would be included in such a multilateral system.[47]

The third and final variable identified by Caporaso, distinguishing the more substantive form of multilateralism from the formal, is what Keohane identifies as "diffuse reciprocity."[48] Specific reciprocity refers to situations where partners "exchange items of equivalent value in a strictly delimited sequence."[49] Diffuse reciprocity, on the other hand, "adjusts the utilitarian lenses for the long view, emphasizing that actors expect to benefit in the long run and over many issues, rather than every time on every issue."[50] Simply put, states that adhere to the ideology of multilateralism often renounce temporary advantages that could be used for the here and now, for *future* advantages. Even though benefits are not immediately forthcoming, diffuse reciprocity ultimately
ensures that giving benefits to other states, while ensuring some future good, is not only good for the national interest, but the global interest as well.

Unilateralism, for its part, can also be understood in both normative and substantive elements. As David Malone and Yuen Foong Khong note, unilateralism "refers to a tendency to *opt out* of a multilateral framework (whether existing or proposed) or to *act alone* in addressing a particular global or regional challenge rather than choosing to participate in collective action"[51] (emphasis in the original). Clearly the number of states involved in policy formation is an important determinant of unilateral action. States who form policy without the engagement of other states, meet one of the criteria of unilateralism.

The second element contained within this working definition of unilateralism pertains to the kind of relations found between state. Apart from a

---

[46] Ibid., 54.
[47] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 13.
[48] Keohane, "Reciprocity in International Relations," 1-27.
[49] Ibid., 4.
[50] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 54.
[51] Malone and Khong, "Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 3.

state either failing to include itself in, or removing itself from, international cooperative efforts, unilateralism focuses on the motivations for choosing either option. While multilateralism involves cooperation amongst three or more states on the basis of generally accepted sets of rules and principles, unilateralism has certain distinguishable characteristics as well – including divisibility and specified principles of conduct.

Divisibility, as oppose to indivisibility, shapes unilateralism. Those promoting a unilateral foreign policy believe that issues must be treated separately because each issue has its own set of unique conditions. If each issue is not separated from all others then the state may actually be acting against its own self-interest. The unilateral form "differentiates relations case-by-case based precisely on a priori particularistic grounds or situational exigencies,"[52] whereas multilateralism is satisfied with winning and or losing at the very least. While this may provoke criticism that their approach is only concerned with the present, as opposed to multilateralism fascination with the future, unilateralists focus on short-term gains and what is in the interest of the state, not the global commons.

Specified principles of conduct, as opposed to generalized principles of conduct, are the second distinguishing feature of unilateralism. Assessing and applying differentiated relations according to certain criteria is important in a system with no laws or legitimate law enforcer. Since each state is influenced by a number of differing geopolitical factors, foreign policy goals, and domestic and international circumstances, critics of multilateralism argue that treating all states equally in the international system is not especially prudent. Applying multilateralism's "general principles of conduct" to all states equally and unselectively, can potentially harm a state's own interests or allies' interests.

Cleary then multilateralism is a highly demanding institutional practice, one which requires states to comply with its rules not simply out of expediency or coercion, but because they perceive the multilateral norms as valuable principles worth retaining and promoting in the international system for the global commons. "A commitment to multilateralism involves more than a procedural

---

[52] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 11.

strategy for conducing one's foreign policy. It suggests a subjective approach and a conscious commitment to the process and substance of the associations – more specifically, a conscious interest in the substantive content of the international order that is supported by multilateral activity."[53] Unilateralism, by contrast, relies little on negotiation, collaboration, and cooperation in the international sphere, and results in few institutional obstacles to prevent it from focusing specifically on pursing the national interest.

Expressions

The multilateral/unilateral dichotomy may be better understood from an operational perspective – the actual expressions or occurrences in various forms of relations with states in the international system. In order to discover any discernable trend(s) in the preferred method of conducting US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War, it will here prove useful to provide further methods in which one may test the degree to which the state adheres to a more multilateralist or unilateralist framework.

Both multilateralism and unilateralism can be found in two main forms – institutions and processes.[54] Processes, generally suffering from an overgeneralization, will be broken into two distinct forms of multilateral/unilateral activities: international treaties and/or arrangements and international norms. As Ruggie correctly notes, "for analytic purposes it is important not to (con)fuse the very meaning of multilateralism with any one particular institutional expression of it,"[55] be it institutions, norms, or treaties. Each can be, but not need be, multilateral in form and content, each independent of the other.[56] Therefore, these three expressions will act as the criteria through which one may be able to test to what extent US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era has been either unilateralist or multilateralist in nature. Since, however, the quantitative aspect requires no further simplification the remaining section

---

[53] Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 4.
[54] Ibid., 5.
[55] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 14.
[56] Ibid., 14.

will focus mostly solely upon the substantive aspects.

International Treaties & Arrangements

International treaties and arrangements are one of the key determinants in trying to distinguish the nature of American security policy. "Treaties or conventions are formal written agreements between states, which create legal obligations for the governments that are parties to them."[57] Treaties and conventions establish generalized principles of state relations, a property that distinguishes multilateralism from all others. There are two types of treaties – bilateral and multilateral. What must be identified when reviewing either bilateral or multilateral treaties is not simply the form, but also the treaty's substance and context. This essay will therefore examine these two variables in order to provide criteria for ascertaining the character of American foreign policy – the form, which looks to the actual consultation and membership, and also the context, in terms of US willingness to ratify and adhere to international treaties.

The signing of international treaties might be considered a multilateral expression in and of itself. However, this is problematic if one defines multilateralism as more than simply the number of states who sign. As Ruggie reminds his reader, signing international treaties does not provide insight into the motivations of those states. Nazi Germany provides a case in point: "politically, Germany pursued an imperial design in the European core…the Nazi scheme of bilateral, discriminatory, and state-controlled trade pacts and monetary clearing arrangements would no doubt have been extended geographically to complement Germany's political objects."[58] Thus, in order to engage in "contract multilateralism,"[59] as some academics have termed it, states must not only be willing to engage two or more states in the construction of treaties, but also reflect elements of substantive multilateralism (ie. indivisibility, generalized principles of conduct, and/or diffuse reciprocity).

One determinant of the multilateral character of a state's foreign policy is

---

[57] Pearson and Rochester, *The Global Condition in the Twenty-First Century*, 338.
[58] Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," 24.
[59] Ikenberry, "American Multilateralism in Decline?," 533-550.

how willingly a state uses conventions to propose international treaties which seek to provide some rules in a state of anarchy. Ultimately it is the state's decision to participate, but the decision to sign and ratify such intergovernmental treaties that also provides a further and more substantial test of a state's multilateral character. Finally, once a state becomes a party to either a bilateral or multilateral treaty, it is expected that its government will honor the principles that are explicitly mentioned within.

The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, signed in 1972, is such an example of a complete multilateral agreement. Firstly, quantitatively more than two states signed the treaty, and secondly, the treaty attempted to support the multilateral order. Since there is no court of international laws, nor any international police force to ensure state adherence to treaty clauses, states ultimately become the final arbiter in ratifying and abiding by the principles associated with the treaty. In the case of the ABM Treaty, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States all voluntary utilized multilateral means, in signing, ratifying, and for over twenty-five years, adhering to the terms of the nonproliferation treaty. Thus, substantive multilateralism expresses itself in three methods: a state's willingness to consent; a state's willingness to sign and ratify the treaty; and a state's willingness to honor the treaty.

Unilateralism, however, with regard to international treaties can be found just as easily. A general reluctance in bringing global complexities to the international community, which may be addressed in the form of a protocol have caused some states to be labeled "unilateralists." Unilateralism does not ultimately hinge upon a state's enthusiasm in seeking the construction of, and signatures to, international treaties for every problem that states face. As Von Oudenaren notes, "unilateralism tends to be associated with non-participation in or non-ratification of agreements, as in the U.S. rejection of Kyoto and the International Criminal Court."[60] The "go-it-alone" approach to international treaties and arrangements, thus, are be dependent upon three factors – a general reluctance to look to international treaties as a viable option, a disinclination to

[60] Van Oudenaren, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and Transatlantic Relations," 2.

participate in general conventions where international treaties can develop, and finally, an unwillingness to either ratify or meet the intended terms of the agreement.

Institutions

Institutions, meaning formal international organizations, are entities "characterized by permanent locations and postal addresses, distinct headquarters, and ongoing staffs and secretariats."[61] There is, however, a common tendency "in the world of actual international organizations, and sometimes in the academic community, to equate the very phenomenon of multilateralism with the universe of multilateral organizations or diplomacy."[62] This is problematic for two reasons. The first, which has been mentioned above, is that not all historical international organizations could be considered multilateral. Ruggie provides two examples of formal institutions in the last sixty years – the Cominterm, and the Cominform. The second problem arises from the lack of scholarly agreement on how narrowly or broadly one defines the term "multilateral institution" with respect to membership, more specifically, whether international institutions must approach universality in membership to be considered truly multilateral. Do non-universal (in both regional and membership terms) institutions exhibit a more unilateral or multilateral character? Having defined multilateralism and unilateralism in a more comprehensive manner herein, there are grounds on which to test the precise character of an institution – including membership, consultation, and adherence.

For action to constitute multilateralism within institutions, both the quantitative and qualitative elements must be met. Membership in an institution, whether regional or international, certainly lends credibility to the multilateralist claim, based exclusively on the nominal definition of multilateralism. In substantive terms, regional and non-universal institutions exhibit multilateral dispositions if they have generalized decision-making rules and consensus-based

---

[61] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 54.
[62] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 13.

procedures written into their constitutions. That being said, one must turn to other, more telling considerations. For instance, how willingly does a state subject its foreign policy decisions to the international scrutiny of the institution? Multilateral states voluntarily consult with institutions over issues deemed to affect more than their own state, in an effort to legitimize things seen as larger than the state, both the institution and the institutionalized process. Unilateral states may be members of a multilateral institution but may also have misgivings about bringing forward foreign issues for international analysis and examination. Furthermore, once those issues are brought before an institution, unilateralism may arise in the form of what Hoffman calls "unilateralism of dictation."[63] While the exercise of American power in international institutions is certainly difficult to avoid, unilateralism goes beyond leadership. Are decisions made with a concern for other states' opinions and concerns, or are decisions made by the United States without any input?

The third and final variable, and the variable most important in determining the multilateral or unilateral character of a state, comes in the form of adherence. Once decisions have been made in the international arena, a key question then becomes: how willingly do states accept the international resolution, and abide by the collective decisions made? Multilateral states not only look to institutions to provide leadership in addressing global issues, but they recognize the long-term benefits of multilateral collaboration, cooperation, and negotiation as beneficial to the global commons, if not always advantageous to their own national interest. Even if the decision is not what a state was seeking, multilateral states accept the decision in an effort to support and preserve the long-run integrity of both the institution itself, and of multilateralism as a whole. Unilateral states, however, are often willing to support the consensus if it is in its interest to do so, but unwilling to adhere to the decision if it does not get what it wants. Preserving whatever is deemed to be in the national interest comes before any supranational body. Simply put, if international institutions are dismissed whenever it is convenient or expedient, this would be the more significant,

[63] Hoffman, "United States and International Organizations," 344.

substantive form of unilateralism.

International Norms

Behaviour in international relations is governed by one of three things: coercion, voluntary compliance, or, as is often the case, some combination of the two.[64] What this essay is most concerned with is the second form. Compliance is partially made up of international norms, or those loosely agreed-upon general principles of what is and is not acceptable in the international arena. As such, norms are one of the major contributions to order within the international system, and subject to a more critical assessment in attempting to characterize the multilateral/unilateral character of American security policy.

While no codified lists of international norms currently exist, there is general agreement on a number of them. According to Dorothy Jones there are nine norms or principles which make up the international rules of cooperation, pointing states to the goal of security and peace within the international system. The nine norms identified by Jones are as follows: sovereign equality of states; territorial integrity and political independence of states; equal rights and self-determination of peoples; nonintervention in the internal affairs of states; peaceful settlement of disputes between states; abstention from the threat or use of force; fulfillment in good faith of international obligations; cooperation with other states; and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.[65] With respect to these norms, the multilateral or unilateral character of the state will rest primarily on two factors: adherence and motivations.

Multilateralism "relates to the deep organization of the units and their mutual recognition and interaction" along these commonly-agreed upon principles of international interaction.[66] While by no means rigid, these guidelines are for the most part accepted by most states and help regulate the international political system. Adherence to international norms is often seen as subscribing to multilateralism, while noncompliance is often associated with unilateralism.

---

[64] Rouke, *International Politics on the World Stage*, 576-77.
[65] Jones, *Code of Peace*, xii.
[66] Ikenberry, "American Multilateralism in Decline?," 534.

However, subscribing to these international norms is not necessarily a conclusive test in ascertaining the character of US actions, due to the fact that all norms are not created with a multilateral end goal in mind.

Increasingly, the academic literature has recognized the existence of two distinct types of norms: selfless (global interest) and selfish (national interest). In order to determine if the state's adherence or noncompliance is multilateral or unilateral in nature, one first must determine the interests being served by the norm in question. The responsibility to protect, a relatively new norm established during the 1990s, argues that the states of the world have a responsibility to intervene in states where that state's government has proved either unwilling or unable to protect its citizens. The responsibility to protect norm is seen as multilateral in nature because it serves the global, as opposed to a simply national, interest. Adherence to norms that are in the national interest may be seen as unilateral action, while reputation of such norms may be made in supporting the multilateral goals of indivisibility and diffuse reciprocity. In determining whether multilateralism is a governing ideal of the state, one must explore first if that norm is being supported or ignored, and second, what type of norm it is.

A second question which can provide valuable insight on the character of the foreign policy is consistency. As a consequence, the frequency and the motivations for US support or indifference to international norms must be examined. Does the US adhere often or rarely? Is the United States indiscriminant or selective in its adherence – supporting one particular norm when it serves American interests, while ignoring it when it fails to do so? The multilateralist framework is ultimately a political commitment to the more substantive part of multilateralism as a whole,[67] one which requires steadfast adherence to multilateralist norms, not because these norms necessarily serve the national interest, broadly or narrowly defined, but out of a duty or sense of responsibility for the process of multilateralism as a whole. It is this commitment to international norms that differentiates those who are multilateral, and those that merely appear to be.

---

[67] Caron, "Between Empire and Community," 396.

Arguing, however, that any state who opposes certain multilateral norms through unilateral action is *ipso facto* unilateralist, is problematic.[68] What must be analyzed are the motivations of doing so. If a state opposes certain international norms in an effort to withdraw from the multilateral process, in hopes of undermining a longstanding norm(s), then clearly, multilateralism is jeopardized. However, if a state withdraws from the process in an attempt to change and remake the multilateral norm, then multilateralism has the possibility of being strengthened. "Assertive multilateralism," as Caron calls it, "is in fact at a deeper strategic level engaged in forging a new and stronger form of multilateralism."[69] This exception can be seen in the areas of democratic development and economic liberalization – two areas in which governments have used unilateral initiatives in an effort to either establish new multilateral norms or to provide stronger international support for such untested norms. "Arguably attempts to forcefully extend democratic development merit this sort of consideration. In this case the effort to advance the norm would seem to require some degree of unilateral initiative as it also challenges rather strong existing norms such as non-intervention and restrictions on the use of force."[70] If a state such as the US undermines a norm, questions must be asked, and motivations must be sought. If a particular norm is undermined with no attempt to develop another to replace or remake it, then that state would appear to be contravening the current multilateral order.

While by no means are these three factors – institutions, norms, and treaties – an exhaustive list of those activities, processes, and institutions which can be used to classify or test whether or not a state's attitude and practice exhibit any trends, then do provide a useful starting point from which to begin this preliminary policy analysis. However, before concluding this section of the paper, a few final observations should be made. Firstly, the above definitions and expressions of both multilateralism and unilateralism "are formal, not empirical descriptions of actual cases, and we would not expect actual cases to conform

---

[68] Ibid., 399.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Tom Keating, email message to author, May 24, 2005.

fully to the formal definitions."[71] Simply put, this thesis does not expect the United States, if it is found to be multilateral, adhering to all three variables (institutions, norms, and treaties). The criteria are not meant to be used as a checklist, where all variables must be met to find conclusive data, but are to be used as a broad outline of what multilateralism or unilateralism should look like.

Secondly, multilateralism and unilateralism refer to the two extremes on a spectrum, with many schools on each side of the dividing line, differing in matters of degree. As Joseph Nye remarks, there are "few pure unilateralists or multilateralists" in the world today, most schools of thought vary along both axis.[72] Not all multilateral (or unilateral acts) are equal in significance; some actions are more significant, while others less so. In other words, there are no such things as black or white unilateralists/multilateralists, but many varying shades of grey. While a president may make small overtures to multilateralists in one aspect, larger and more significant acts may be made unilaterally and the evaluation must allow for some discretion in determining the actual characterization of the administrations.

SECTION II

Having outlined the methods for evaluation this paper will employ, I will now turn to a summary of the major foreign policy decisions made from 1990 (the end of the Cold War) to the present. I will begin to gather the empirical data from this period in order not only to examine what has happened but also to attempt to explain it. By examining the post-Cold War security policies of Presidents George H. Bush (1989 – 1993), William J. Clinton (1993 – 2000), and George W. Bush (2000 – present), and specifically by analyzing the decisions made regarding international treaties, international organizations, and international norms, the questions regarding the multilateral/unilateral dichotomy will be made more apparent. This paper will provide a short survey, which is illustrative, not comprehensive of the unilateralist/multilateralist character of US security policy

[71] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 14.
[72] Nye, "Seven Tests," 6.

since the conclusion of the Cold War.

This paper makes two observations. Firstly, that American foreign policy has been, for the much of the post-Cold War period, tilted towards unilateralism. The second claim made is that American foreign policy, which began with a somewhat questionable commitment to multilateralism under the first Bush administration, has grown evermore unilateralist with each successive administration. In contrast to the popular belief that Republican's are strongly opposed to the constraints entailed with committing to multilateralism, President George H.W. Bush was the most committed to the overall ideology of all presidents since the fall of communism. With the election of President William Clinton, there was a profound ambivalence towards multilateralism both as a goal and a means. Unilateralism increasingly crept into the US agenda under Clinton. Though it may have been perceived as a "last resort" when multilateral efforts failed or would harm American interests, it existed nonetheless. The ambiguity over multilateralism present with Clinton was removed immediately with the election of President George W. Bush. Unilateralism not only became the preferred policy option of President George W. Bush, but it also became the central tenet of his foreign policy doctrine.

George H.W. Bush

The end of the Cold War provided a new context for American foreign policy. Gone were the days of two easily distinguishable sides; the bipolar world, which had provided very little optimism for international cooperation, negotiation, and compromise between states, had been replaced. Effectively, "the end of the cold war eliminated a number of reliable and well-recognized reference points from the landscape and established new, as yet ambiguous ones."[73] One of these "ambiguous" factors turned out to be the new optimism that surfaced both within the United States and in Europe over the plausibility and willingness to use multilateralism as the operating principle in the current international system.

---

[73] Scott and Crothers, "Out of the Cold," 1.

Without the constant threat of nuclear brinkmanship and communism, many believed that a kinder, gentler form of relations would develop in the international arena, allowing multilateralism to become the preferred means of international relations. However, questions began to arise during this period, weighing the costs and benefits of using the multilateralist approach. Questions such as why a newly established hegemonic state – unrivaled in economic, cultural, political, and technological powers – would subject itself to multilateral constraints if it did not have to, remained prevalent throughout this period.

George Bush (Sr.), however, did not appear to see multilateralism as "a tool of the weak that leading power can safely ignore."[74] In fact, George Bush (Sr.) appeared to embrace the concepts of "negotiation, compromise, and the virtues of agreed constraints."[75] In his address to Congress on March 6, 1991, George Bush proclaimed a "new world order." Incorporated into this vision were the principles of "collective security, the rule of law, democratic governance, and expanding trade;" ideals which created the foundation of the multilateral imperative.

Had the end of the Cold War, which had afforded the American state the asymmetry of power currently enjoyed, also provided conditions conducive to multilateralism? Was George H.W. Bush the multilateralist that his rhetoric would seem to suggest, or did his actions support a more unilateral characterization? Using the criteria as set out above, this paper will begin to assess the US commitment towards multilateralism through international treaties, institutions, and norms under the administration of George Bush. What the empirical seems to suggest is that George Bush (Sr.) acted in a surprisingly multilateralist manner, in light of both his Republican roots and the newly established power asymmetries formed throughout the world, with respect to form. However, President Bush's multilateral commitment largely revolved more around number, than around norms, the more formal, rather than the more substantive.

---

[74] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 73.
[75] Gnesotto, "An End to Introversion," 1.

International Treaties & Arrangements

The quantity and substance of the international agreements signed during the first Bush administration certainly support claims of multilateralism. Not only did President Bush engage in passive multilateralism (signing, ratifying, and adhering to international agreements), but the US proved to be a leader in the active form as well, by initiating and negotiating a number of rule-based agreements with states. The most significant of these agreements were in regards to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). With the collapse of the Soviet state, the US was provided with a unique opportunity to not only constrain nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons that had previously dictated its foreign policy choices, but also to address new global proliferation concerns. The notion of such weapons spreading to new entities – both state and non-state actors – that may be more inclined to use them in one form or another, provoked the US to turn to multilateral treaties as a possible solution.[76] As Van Oudenaren observes, "the United States entered the post-Cold War era in a decidedly multilateralist frame of mind"[77] when trying to solve problems of security. Evidence of this can be found in the numerous treaties both proposed and signed by the Bush administration regarding weapons – both conventional and unconventional.

The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty was one such multilateral expression. With improving relations amongst the old Cold War enemies, multilateral arrangements were sought in an effort to further reduce tensions. The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) led to dramatic reductions in conventional European based arsenals deemed not necessary during the final year of the Cold War. Twenty-three states, including the Soviet Union and the United States, became signatories on November 19, 1990 to the twenty-three article treaty. The treaty limited five weapon categories establishing limits of: "20,000 tanks; 30,000 armored combat vehicles; 20,000 artillery pieces; 6,800 combat aircraft; and 2,000 attack helicopters."[78] Reductions were to be implemented in

---

[76] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 117.
[77] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 69.
[78] McCausland, "A Cold War Anachronism?," http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/cfe/news/cfetrty.htm.

stages "with each country reducing by 25 per cent of its overall requirement the first year, 60 per cent in 1994, and 100 per cent by November 1995 with a period of four months (until March 1996) to verify residual levels."[79]

Aside from conventional weapons treaties, multilateral arrangements were also sought in order to control and limit the more unconventional weapons – most notably in the form of weapons of mass destruction. The United States was successful in promoting a number of international agreements dealing specifically with the threat posed by nuclear weapons. The most successful agreement completed during this period was in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). After nine years of disagreement and distrust, President Bush was able to renew and conclude the substantial arms reductions. Agreeing in 1991 to the reduction of land, sea, and airborne nuclear forces by six thousand weapons by both the USSR and the US, this treaty reinforced the notion that the United States would act responsibly with its new-found power, and not act unilaterally with respect to strategic arms.[80] During the Washington summit, in June 1992, Bush announced that Russia and the US provided an addendum, later to be known as START II, which called for "a sixty percent reduction of the two powers' combined total nuclear arsenals – from about 15,000 warheads to 6,500 by the year 2003."[81]

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was a third example of the American commitment to multilateral treaties. Witnessing the destruction that chemical weapons had caused in humanitarian terms in Iraq, George H.W. Bush attempted to make it less attractive for states in the international community to attempt to produce, store, and sell chemical weapons. As a result, Bush launched negotiations which eventually led to the treaty banning chemical weapons, with the signing completed during the first year of the Clinton administration, and to establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), responsible for implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention

---

[79] Ibid.
[80] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy,* 118.
[81] Wittkopf et al., *American Foreign Policy,* 102.

(which was later established formally under Clinton in 1997).[82] Bush sought a multilateral agreement that would go beyond the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which had merely established a ban on the actual use of such weapons, hoping in addition to establish a complete ban on the production and storage of chemical weapons.[83] On May 16, 1991, Bush announced a series of steps that the United States would agree to in an effort to strengthen the "prospects of an early successful conclusion of the Chemical Weapons Convention," including:

> formally [forswearing] the use of chemical weapons for any reason, including retaliation, against any state, effective when the Convention enters into force and propose that all states follow suit; unconditionally commit itself to the destruction of all [American] stocks of chemical weapons within ten years of entry into force and propose that all other states do likewise; offer technical assistance to others so that they can destroy their chemical weapons stock efficiently and safely; call for setting a target date to conclude the Convention and recommend the Conference stay in continuous session if necessary to meet the target; purpose new and effective measures for inspecting sites suspected of producing or storing chemical weapons.[84]

As Bush's leadership in all three treaties illustrates, the United States proved a proponent of proactive multilateralism. Instead of ignoring European and Asian concerns, the United States initiated conferences and international agreements in an effort to facilitate more copasetic relations amongst states.

Evaluation of US Policy

All three treaties – the Conventional Forces Treaty, the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, and the Chemical Weapons Convention – while not necessarily meeting the nominal definition of multilateralism, all certainly meet the more substantive definitions of multilateralism. The Conventional Forces Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention were signed by more than three states and thus multilateral in a quantitative sense; START, however, was bilateral in its

---

[82] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 69.
[83] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy,* 119.
[84] Federation of American Scientists, "Weapons of Mass Destruction," http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/cwc/chron.htm.

form simply due to the fact that only two states signed on. What these three examples suggest is that President Bush and his administration were willing to cooperate with other states in areas concerning US national security. While not all treaties were multilateral in numbers, all three contained a more substantial multilateral context.

By resorting to international treaties and arrangements, the United States ultimately was willing to forgo some of their freedom in an effort to promote international cooperation. By establishing generalized principles of conduct, with respect to weapons, the US reinforced elements of multilateralism. In playing the central role in initiating these treaties, the US not only set rules regarding reductions in numbers, amounts, and kinds of weapons allowed, but signaled President Bush's willingness to abide by the rules it helped create. Under the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, for instance, the US agreed to reduce its strategic forces by one-third. Later that year, President Bush would make further reductions, including calling "long-range bombers off twenty-four hour alert, cancel[ing] plans to deploy the long-range MX missile on rail cars, and offer[ing] to negotiate sharp reductions in the most dangerous kinds of globe-spanning missiles."[85] During the entirety of the Bush administration, there was not only an effort to make international rules but also to live by them.

Moreover, signing these treaties was a clear adherence to diffuse reciprocity. American participation in international treaties effectively put the global interest before the narrow American interests. Reducing America's arsenal of both conventional and unconventional weapons was not a policy that made some American's feel more secure. For many Americans security often depended upon not only having the relative militaristic advantage, but also the size of that advantage. Critics saw the reduction of its military arsenal as jeopardizing American security; Bush, for his part, saw it as making both the US and the world as a whole safer. "President [George H.W.] Bush described the hopeful future that START II portended: 'With this agreement the nuclear nightmare recedes

---

[85] Wittkopf et al., *American Foreign Policy,* 102.

more and more for ourselves, for our children, and for our grandchildren.'"[86] President Bush's willingness not only to sign treaties, but to actually create such international agreements, during a period of such unparalleled power supports the principles of multilateralism. Attempting to establish generalized principles of conduct – in the creation and subsequent use of weapons of mass destruction – and diffuse reciprocity, in the US' willingness to forgo solving immediate national security concerns and instead attempting to solve international insecurities, seems to speak to the apparent multilateral nature of US foreign policy in the early 1990s.

International Institutions

While George H.W. Bush certainly appeared to follow multilateral approaches with respect to international treaties, can the same be said with respect to his approach to multilateral organizations? According to the empirical data, the evidence is not so persuasive. To address the most significant challenge during his presidency – the international crisis in the Middle East – President Bush stood determined to use international institutions. The Americans' response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent Persian Gulf War, illustrates a significant multilateral commitment by the Bush administration. However, had international consensus not overwhelmingly backed US policy, it is questionable whether the US would have continued on the multilateral path.

On August 2, 1990, the Iraqi Army invaded the sovereign state of Kuwait, a move that surprised much of the world. In a startling reversal of the previous US administration's tendency, President Bush's decision to work within the United Nations to deal with the invasion of Kuwait signaled an apparent commitment to institutional multilateralism. On the same day as the invasion, an emergency Security Council meeting convened and passed Security Council Resolution 660 by a unanimous vote of fourteen to nil.[87] Resolution 660 acknowledged that Iraq's actions had "breached international peace and security,"

---

[86] Bush as cited in Wittkopf, Eugene, R., et al. 102.
[87] Yemen was absent from the vote.

and demanded "Iraq withdraw immediately and unconditionally" from Kuwait.[88] However, repeated international requests to pull out of Kuwait were ignored by Iraq's President Saddam Hussein and questions soon began to arise regarding how the US would react. Could the US remain committed to the United Nations? Moreover, would the US be willing to defend the UN's stance?

The answer to both questions came within a week of the invasion, with the passage of a second, more significant, Security Council resolution. By a vote of thirteen to zero, with Cuba and Yemen abstaining, Resolution 661 affirmed "the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence" in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.[89] In response, President Bush authorized the deployment of the 82nd Airborne to Saudi Arabia to ensure Hussein would not invade that country as well,[90] or at least that was the officially stated purpose.[91] In addition, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, Resolution 661 imposed strict diplomatic and economic sanctions as a consequence of Iraq's failure to comply with the Security Council's previous resolution. Both member and non-member states were asked to prevent imports of Iraqi goods, halt the sale or supply of all commodities and products, freeze Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets, and refuse to provide any financial or economic resources while Iraq was in breach of international law and the United Nations.[92]

While the economic embargo certainly had deleterious effects on the Iraqi regime – Iraqi oil exports were successfully halted, imports were reduced by 90 percent, and Iraq's GNP fell by almost 40 percent immediately[93] – the United States remained unconvinced that these actions alone would result in Iraqi

---

[88] UNSC Res. 661 of 6 August 1990.
[89] UNSC Res. 661 of 6 August 1990.
[90] Stiles, Kendall, W. Case Histories in International Politics, p. 127.
[91] A number of academics have postulated that American intensions inside Iraq had more to with national interests, rather than collective security norms. Gary Sick, in "The United States in the Persian Gulf: From Twin Pillars to Dual Containment," argues that the reasons the US intervened in Iraq was two-fold. The first reason was "to ensure access by the industrialized world to the vast oil resources; and second, to prevent any hostile power from acquiring political or military control over those resources", 291.
[92] UNSC Res. 661 of 6 August 1990.
[93] Tucker and Henderson as cited by Stiles, 128.

withdrawal of Kuwait. Thus, the question moved from whether or not states would condemn the Iraqi regime, to whether or not those member states would enforce the threats member states laid out in relevant Security Council Resolutions. "The Americans and the British would have preferred some reference to enforcement in Resolution 661 but had judged that there was no chance of this being agreed to."[94] The United States remained resolute in its desire to produce an international solution to the international crisis. By the end of September, over 250,000 troops from twenty-eight countries were assembled in the Middle East in case political and diplomatic pressure was unable to persuade Iraq from withdrawing from Kuwait. As international demands continued to be ignored, President Bush announced his decision to double US troop strength – from 250,000 to 500,000 – in the Gulf.[95] As the military option became increasingly likely, the United States again requested Security Council approval and support, and received it.

Eleven resolutions later, Resolution 678 was put forward by the United States asking member states of the United Nations to authorize the use of force. Passing by a vote of twelve to two (Yemen and Cuba), and one abstention (China) on November 29, 1990, Resolution 678 offered Iraq "one final opportunity, as a pause of goodwill" to comply with all preceding resolutions by January 15, 1991.[96] If Iraq again ignored this final opportunity, Resolution 678 authorized member states to use "all necessary means" to "restore international peace and security in the area."[97] Moreover, throughout this period the United States continued to solicit all forms of support, from financial to military, as the US wanted the largest coalition it could possibly acquire. The UN-imposed deadline fell with no significant shift in Hussein's actions or rhetoric, leaving the United Nations with little alternative but to enforce their words through military action. On January 17, 1991, led by the United States, Operation Desert Storm commenced.

---

[94] Freedman and Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict*, 84.
[95] Stiles, 129.
[96] UN Security Council Resolution 678, passed on November 29, 1990.
[97] Ibid.

Explanation of US Foreign Policy

Thought of by many as the "classic case study of multilateralism",[98] many proponents of multilateralism use the first Gulf War as the gold-standard in how states should deal with the issue of the use of force. As Michael Mandelbaum notes, the Gulf War "was ostensibly waged to uphold a basic principle of international law – to affirm the sanctity of sovereign borders, which the Iraqi invasion violated."[99] However, although many academics still characterize the US response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as multilateral in both form and substance, it may be prudent to take a more skeptical approach. While on the one hand, the decision to include the UN to resolve global conflicts in the international system proved a major step in legitimizing not only the United Nations, but ultimately the norms and values it upholds, from a substantive standpoint, to suggest that the US' response was influenced solely by the interests of the "international community" would be idealistic.

With the United States' unmatched power in military affairs, its keen interests in both maintaining the uninterrupted flow of oil coming from the Middle East, and its desire to ensure no other hostile power could acquire either the political or military control over those resources,[100] it would not have been entirely unsurprising to have seen the newly hegemonic US take matters into its own hands. World opinion too, may well have remained on the American's side; the powerful guarantor of world stability punishing the incontrovertible aggressor would have seemed logical, sensible, and just to all other states. However, the fact that the US pursued and attained a Security Council Resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq clearly indicated American commitment to formal multilateralism. The US worked almost exclusively within the confines of the UN, with the US taking the lead in the construction of most of the dozen resolutions dealing with Iraq and Kuwait, including the most significant – Resolution 660, 661, and 678. Thus, the more easily identifiable, procedural form

---

[98] Krauthammer, "Unipolar Moment," 10.
[99] Mandelbaum, 98.
[100] Sick, Gary, "The United States in the Persian Gulf: From Twin Pillars to Dual Containment," in *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical Political Reassessment*, 3rd ed., ed. David W. Lesch (Boulder: Westview Press, 2003), 291.

of multilateralism was achieved by working through the auspices of the United Nations.

Considerations of the more substantive element of multilateralism do, however, pose more difficulties. It is possible to speculate about what would have happened had the conditions not been optimal for the US to work within the confines of the UN, and had multilateralism the unobstructed policy path that it was. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was a clear violation of international law, and had Hussein been not so adamant about rejecting all diplomatic avenues to resolve this dispute, would it have been so easy for the US to get UN assistance? Hypothetically, had the UN refused to pass Resolutions 660, 661, and 678, multilateralism most likely would have been sidestepped to ensure the protection of American interests in the Middle East. Simply put, the US could safely use multilateralism; they didn't have to face any alternative option since most of the world was already supportive of military action against the aggressor fearing their state could be next. Clearly, the US' adherence to UN resolutions allowed it to fulfill the first part of the multilateral question, the quantitative aspect. Questions still exist, however, with respect to the second, more substantive aspect.

Take, for instance, President Bush's own assessment of the war. President Bush and many of his close advisors made a number of statements that suggested at this time that multilateralism was an inherent good in and of itself. Both George Bush and his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, believed there was "value in seeking Security Council authorization for expelling Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991."[101] In the coauthored book, *A World Transformed*, Bush and Scowcroft suggest that they,

> believed that the United States should not go it alone, that a multilateral approach was better. This was, in part a practical matter. Mounting an effective military counter to Iraq's invasion required the backing and bases of Saudi Arabia and other Arab states. Building an international response led us immediately to the United Nations, which could provide a cloak of acceptability to our efforts...[102]

---

[101] Luck, "Quest for Legitimacy," 59.
[102] Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, 491.

The explicit reference to cloaking interests seems to suggest that even Bush and Scowcroft seemed convinced that multilateralism, at least in this instance, was used more as a tool for disguising US' interests, rather than a norm worth upholding in and of itself. The legitimacy that the UN could provide the US was unmatched by any state or international organization. The fact that the US turned to the UN in hopes that *it* could pass US-sponsored resolutions was simply a no-lose situation. Acquiring UN support to sanction American actions, without too much alteration from the original war aims, was worth the effort. If the US could get UN approval, the US could still attack Iraq and defend American interests, gaining UN legitimacy and receiving assistance in paying for the invasion, both financially and militarily, in the process. If UN support was not immediately forthcoming, the US most likely would have attacked with a "coalition of the willing," an option it was willing to use regardless of the UN's position.[103] Going through the multilateral channels was effectively a "win-win" situation, and one which simply provides little evidence of substantiate claims of qualitative multilateralism.

If the Americans' disguised multilateral attempts could be considered a form of unilateralism, the unilateralism exhibited during the Gulf War fundamentally differed from later forms by subsequent presidents. During the Gulf War, President Bush made a number of genuine concessions towards multilateralism. During the planning and objective phase, for instance, President Bush allowed his agenda to be considerably altered during the Gulf War crisis; one area where this became clear was in the actual war aims/goals. In order to gain Security Council approval, the US, regardless of the widespread desire by administration members, had to limit its war aims from regime change to only liberation of Kuwait. Allowing the Iraqi Republican Guard to return to Iraq without pursuit towards the end of the war indicated what Bush and his advisors valued more at that particular moment – the retention of the current international consensus. "Going further would have fractured the coalition, gone against [the]

[103] Ghabra, "Reluctant Ally," 316.

promise to allies and violated the UN resolutions under which [the US was] acting."[104] By utilizing the United Nations, the United States ultimately "retained some commitment to promoting and strengthening international institutions and seeking to shape a multilateral consensus within them."[105]

Further evidence that the unilateralism practiced by George Bush (Sr.) was not the pure, aggressive form that characterized subsequent administrations, can also be found in the numerous compromises made toward its former Cold War rival. President Bush made numerous attempts to satisfy Russian concerns and gain assent on UN Security Council Resolution 678. Secretary of State James Baker flew to Moscow in preparation for the vote authorizing the use of force. Baker suggested the "all necessary means, including force" clause to Shevardnadze, but there was some disagreement.[106] Gorbachev also requested and received a "period of goodwill," so as to provide one last opportunity to allow Hussein to leave Kuwait. While many, including the Americans, British, and Kuwaitis, were against the diplomatic pause and the inclusion of a set date for liberating Kuwait, the United States yielded to Russian requests in order to enlarge the coalition.[107] By pursuing an international consensus, particularly one which included its former Soviet foe, the US abandoned unilateralism in favor of the more popular multilateralism.

Overall, the Americans' decision to work through the United Nations with respect to the invasion of Kuwait provides little tangible evidence that suggests the US, under President Bush, was committed to substantive multilateral endeavors; in fact, what I have argued herein is that, when examining the US' actions with respect to international organizations, the US engaged in subtle forms of unilateralism. What would have confirmed such suspicions would have been the Americans' response had it not acquired UN support in defending Kuwait. That being said, the concessions that President Bush made towards the institution of multilateralism were significant, differentiating this administration from the

---

[104] Krauthammer, "Unipolar Moment," 10.
[105] Foot, MacFarlane, And Mastanduno, "Introduction," 12.
[106] Freedman and Karsh, 231.
[107] Ibid., 233.

two that followed. While the US' decision to work within the UN appears to meet one of the multilateral criteria, the more substantive aspects are not completely satisfied. In the case of the Gulf War, the substantive aspects of US foreign policy neither conform fully to either multilateral or unilateral, showing flashes of both at different times.

International Norms

Aside from the acquisition and implementation of multilateral consensus in dealing with institutions, one might also recall the Bush administration's commitment to multilateralism through American support of global norms. While there were a number of normative considerations which would prove influential in the creation of US foreign policy, this section will look at the two most significant – collective security and humanitarian intervention.

The United Nations was constructed on a philosophical belief in collective security and its ability to deter potential aggressors. Collective security refers to "a system in which each state in the system accepts that the security of one is the concern of all and agrees to join in a collective response to aggression."[108] Ultimately, while nothing could eradicate a state's insatiable will to power (often expressed through conquest and expansion), the best alternative, many believed, was for the aggressor to face a united, international coalition. Put simply, the prospect that a potential aggressor would have to face an international community-wide response served to deter any rational potential aggressor.[109]

Thus, it was believed that the threat of collective action would ultimately lead to the abolition of war. While logical in theoretical terms, the flaws inherent in its practical application soon became evident. Animosity between the Cold War superpowers ensured deadlock in the Security Council, the only organization which could authorize military intervention. While the principles of collective security have existed since the creation of the modern states system, one would be pressed to come up with an example of its use before the end of the Cold War.

---

[108] Roberts, "United Nations and International Security," 23.
[109] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 9.

The Gulf War provided the opportunity for the United States to resurrect the consensus-based global norm, which had remained elusive throughout much of the current Westphalian state system.

The case of Iraq fits the model of collective security in two critical ways. Firstly, "the international community was lined up against a lone aggressor who enjoyed minimal external support."[110] In three successive Security Council resolutions, what struck most observers was the apparent cohesion of the international community's condemnation of Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait and the subsequent repercussions aimed at Iraq and its leader. Security Council Resolution 660, condemning Iraq's invasion, was unanimously passed 14-0,[111] and Resolution 661, authorizing economic sanctions to be placed on Iraq, also passed 13-0.[112] The only states to vote against Resolution 678 authorizing the use of force were Cuba and Yemen, with China abstaining – an unsurprising move based on all three state's historical opposition to the practice of intervention. Further international consensus was evident in a November resolution condemning Iraqi treatment of hostages and threats to diplomatic property in the General Assembly, a resolution which passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 148 to 1 (Iraq).[113]

The fact that the United States was able to assemble a multinational coalition of states to implement armed enforcement provides a second piece of evidence supporting claims of defending collective security. The multinational allied coalition was comprised of twenty-eight states, spanning six continents.[114] Muslim states including, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, contributed to the war effort, which enhanced the overall legitimacy of the international response in the Arab world. While some states chose to provide military troops, other states showed their support in other forms. Russia's support, while not militaristic in nature, may have been considered equal in its

---

[110] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 37.
[111] Yemen absent from vote held on August 2, 1990.
[112] Cuba and Yemen abstained form vote held August 6, 1990.
[113] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 48.
[114] *CNN Online*, "The Unfinished War: A Decade since Desert Storm," http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS /2001/gulf.war/facts/gulfwar/.

diplomatic contributions. Not only did it support Resolutions 660, 661, and 678 (which had authorized "any means necessary" to remove Iraq from the sovereign state of Kuwait), but more significantly, "it was the unwillingness of Moscow to use its veto to protect its former ally [which] allowed the current enforcement action against Iraq to take place under UN auspices."[115] With the US taking the lead in acquiring international accord in the United Nations, and in creating a united, global force to defend international law when violated, President Bush conveyed a willingness to support a legal and principled approach to international relations.

However, while collective security was used to defend the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention, the concept of humanitarian intervention became increasingly influential in shaping American foreign policy. In both Iraq and Somalia, the United States was faced with debates regarding humanitarian intervention. During the early 1990s, Somalia collapsed into anarchy. Rival clans divided the state into warring factions, leaving the African state with no central government, police force, or civil order. The civil war resulted in enormous numbers of refugees (500,000 entering neighboring African states), internally displaced persons (500,000), and famine-related civilian deaths (350,000).[116] However, while the outlook in Somalia remained bleak and the refugee crisis continued to worsen drawing neighboring states into the malaise, the international community did not feel that a large-scale humanitarian intervention was the appropriate response. Thus, the international response was limited in response, and the objectives were minimal in scope.

Two Security Council Resolutions, while acknowledging the humanitarian crisis currently underway in Somalia, offered little in the way of a solution. Both Resolutions 733 and 751 called upon the Secretary General to "undertake the necessary action to increase humanitarian assistance" to the people of Somalia, and called upon all parties to work with the Secretary General to facilitate the

---

[115] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 42.
[116] von Hippel, *Democracy by Force*, 59.

delivery of aid.[117] It was not until Resolution 751, passed in April 1991, that the Security Council agreed to provide international observers and a UN peacekeeping force in the state. However, "so reluctant were the Americans to face Congress on the issue that they had to be persuaded by the other members of the Council to allow the observer mission to be paid for out of assessed rather than voluntary contributions over which they had discretionary control."[118]

The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) was provided with a mandate to restore peace and protect humanitarian relief operations. However, the small contingent of 500 lightly armed Pakistani troops proved inadequate at securing effective food distribution and reinforcing the Somali ceasefire. "By mid-summer it had become clear that, without strong support from the United States, the UN lacked the organization resources and its members the political interest or will to fashion a coherent strategy for Somalia."[119] Many within political positions of power in the US were opposed to any escalation of American involvement in this crisis for a variety of domestic factors (ie. the upcoming election, a declining economy, and the clear lack of any national interest).

Deteriorating conditions in Somalia, however, prompted an intensification of American efforts. Incited by a UN report released in November which stated there were as many as 1,000 Somalis dying daily and three-fourths of Somalia's children under the age of five already dead, President Bush single-handedly changed the US position.[120] On December 3, 1992, the Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 794, authorizing a large US-led military humanitarian intervention – Unified Task Force (UNITAF) – "to secure ports and airfields, protect relief shipments and works, and assist humanitarian relief efforts."[121] Resolution 794, which designated Somalia as a threat to international peace and security, was the first to establish a humanitarian operation under

---

[117] UNSC Res. 733 of 23 January 1991 and UNSC Res. 751 of 17 March 1991
[118] Lewis and Mayall, "Somalia," 108.
[119] Lewis and Mayall, "Somalia," 109.
[120] Mingst and Karns, *United Nations in the Post-Cold War Era*, 92.
[121] Ibid.

Chapter VII, and without an explicit invitation from the parties to the conflict.[122]

Explanation of US Foreign Policy

With the end of the Cold-War era, President Bush, the architect of the 'new world order' had clearly signaled a new concern for principles in addition to national interests. American defence of international norms, such as collective security and humanitarian intervention, serve to reinforce claims of President Bush's commitment and respect for multilateralism. What is noteworthy is that in terms of both process and context, President Bush appeared determined to acquire multilateral support when dealing with international norms.

Adherence to multilateralism, with respect to form, is clear with regards to the above examples and with the Bush administration in general. Whether in defence of collective security in Iraq, or humanitarian intervention in Somalia, the United States dealt multilaterally on questions dealing with the use of force. As expressed in the United Nations Charter, "the Security Council has, through the Charter, been given by UN Member States the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security."[123] Barring an act of self-defence, the Security Council is the only body allowed to authorize use of force. Clear authority has been delegated to the Security Council under Article 39 in determining whether peace and security has been breached, and if so, it is the only body authorized to impose sanctions or military force against an aggressor.[124] While the Americans were prepared to act unilaterally in both instances, "they were understandably anxious to have international support on the ground as well as in the Security Council."[125] The US pursued multilateral means in Iraq and Somalia, and in both instances resolutions authorizing force were passed by Security Council members.

As US actions clearly conform to procedural multilateralism, one may now turn to the issue of substantive compliance. The American defence of the

---

[122] Lewis and Mayall, "Somalia," 110.
[123] Sarooshi, *United Nations and the Development of Collective Security*, 5.
[124] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 41.
[125] Ibid.

norms of collective security and humanitarian intervention, by their very natures, embody multilateralist principles in three critical ways. Firstly, the multilateral principle found intrinsically in the collective security model is indivisibility. Indivisibility, as noted above, was defined as the spreading of the costs and benefits, in both a geographic and functional sense.[126] In Hussein's Iraq, each member of the international system saw Iraq as the aggressor, a fact which invariably threatened peace not only of Kuwait, but also with the potential to destabilize the entire Middle East. The attack was viewed by the vast majority of states in the international system, as not simply an attack on Kuwait, but an attack on all states. In Somalia, the member states also recognized the destabilizing factor that mass violence and starvation caused not only in Somalia, but also in the neighboring states of Kenya, Djibouti, among others. Conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, threatened the entire region in both instances. "Indivisibility here is a *social construction*, not a technical condition: in a collective-security scheme, states behave as though peace were indivisible, and thereby make it so" [127] (emphasis in original).

In addition to indivisibility, both collective security and humanitarian intervention are predicated on the principle of diffuse reciprocity. In a system of diffuse reciprocity, states focus on the long term, "emphasizing that actors expect to benefit in the long run and over many issues, rather than every time on every issue."[128] Put another way, each "assumes that states are prepared to act decisively on this recognition even if such action is costly and goes against their more immediate short-term interests."[129] In Iraq, while oil interests may indeed have factored into the decision, the same cannot be said about Somalia. Based on the lack of geopolitical value at stake in Somalia, the US intervention appears motivated by humanitarian concerns. The costs of the intervention, in both economic ($2.3 billion spent by the US government) and human terms (18 US

---

[126] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 53-54.
[127] Ruggie, "The Anatomy of an Institution," 10.
[128] Caporaso, "The Search for Foundations," 54.
[129] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 47.

soldiers),[130] were outweighed by both the humanitarian and systemic benefits. Not only would innocent lives be spared, but success would also "reinforce the norms of international society, deter future aggressors, and make the actual need to implement collective enforcement in the future far less likely."[131] With its intervention in Somalia, a decision based on defending the status quo, the United States recognized that in the long run the costs of maintaining the current legalist, multilateral order are greatly outweighed by the benefits.

The final characteristic of both global norms, which reinforces the multilateral nature of the American decisions, is the application of generalized principles of conduct. What the collectively sanctioned interventions illustrate is that common values and interests exist across a majority of states. There was a willingness to defend overarching principles that were in the interest of the entire community – the mutual recognition of sovereignty, respect for non-intervention, the need to limit the use of aggressive force, and the need to uphold respect for human rights – that supported the principles of multilateralism. In one instance, the United States resurrected an established norm, ignored by decades of superpower competition; in another, President Bush aggressively worked to form a norm that seemed to be supported across a wide grouping of states. Both collective security and humanitarian intervention effectively represented the general will of the community over limited national interests, and as a result, are clear indications of the US commitment to substantive multilateralism.

Overall President Bush's record on multilateralism was decidedly mixed. Firstly, President Bush seemed more comfortable with using multilateralism in some contexts, while in other instances less so. With respect to international treaties, for instance, President Bush appeared comfortable with the constraints and obligations that multilateralism entails, not only signing treaties, but also in creating and promoting them, as was the case with START and the CWC. Multilateralism expressed through international institutions, however, saw President Bush more guarded in his approach. Increasingly, traces of

---

[130] von Hippel, *Democracy by Force*, 55.
[131] Hurrell, "Collective Security," 37.

unilateralism seemed to arise in the Bush administration. On a number of occasions the US might well have gone it on their own, spurning the constraints of multilateral action, if international approval was not immediately forthcoming. They clearly would have preferred not to, and did not end up having to, but it was in these situations that bring about uncertainty in US foreign policy. However, the hints of unilateralism present during George H.W. Bush's term fundamentally differed from the kinds that Presidents Clinton and Bush (Jr.) would use. At times, there were attempts to "multilateralize" unilateralism. For instance, the US could have gone alone in Iraq, but instead chose to alter its policy goals to work within the larger international framework. By focusing his attention more on satisfying the formal aspects, as oppose to the substantive, of multilateralism, it seemed more important for the US to appear multilateral than to be so.

William J. Clinton

The initial American euphoria over the concept of multilateralism continued with the election of William Jefferson Clinton in 1992. Taking office in 1993, President Clinton was committed (at least rhetorically) to a policy of "assertive multilateralism," a term first used by US ambassador to the United Nations, Madeline Albright. Albright "claimed that the United States had to enhance its foreign policy through multilateral forums, and that the State Department's intent was to ensure that those forums, particularly the UN, were sufficiently strengthened to carry out these policy goals."[132] With the commitment to assertive multilateralism providing the foundation, President Clinton made significant progress on a number of multilateral initiatives. Significant multilateral success was achieved with Clinton securing the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Uruguay Round trade agreements, including the creation of the World Trade Organization, and acquiring Senate approval for NATO.

---

[132] MacKinnon, *Evolution of US Peacekeeping Policy*, 43.

However, while there were a handful of multilateral proposals created and ratified by the legislative and executive branches during the Clinton era, these were exceptions in a foreign policy largely characterized by ambivalence towards substantive multilateralism. After sustaining a number of casualties in Somalia, the United States retreated from the earlier policy of assertive multilateralism. In a variety of contexts, the ambivalent approach adopted by Clinton focused on multilateralism as a means to an end, not an end in itself, in order to gain international and domestic approval. What the following case studies seem to illustrate is that the Clinton administration's commitment to multilateralism focused on the quantitative or procedural aspects, largely ignoring the more contextual, substantive form. While it may be granted that a trend away from multilateralism preceded the Clinton administration, it is certain that his actions increased the speed of that trend.

International Treaties & Arrangements

From June 15 to July 17, 1998, the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court took place in Rome. The Rome Statute, as it has been referred to, witnessed over 160 states, 33 intergovernmental organizations, and 236 nongovernmental organizations participating in the five week multilateral conference.[133] "The conference concluded by adopting the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court by a non recorded vote of 120 in favor, 7 against and 21 abstentions."[134] The United States, however, was not one of the 120 who initially signed on to the treaty. Instead it joined China, Israel and four other states (Iraq, Libya, Katar, Yemen) in opposing, what one critic called, one of the most important "public international law[s] since the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention."[135] The debate regarding the Rome Statute and what it was meant to establish – the International Criminal Court (ICC) – became, at its core, one of the key policies that reinforced

[133] Arsanjani, "Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court," 22.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Nolte, "United States and the International Criminal Court," 71.

the ambivalent approach that the United States adopted toward multilateralism under President Clinton.

The final text of the Rome Statute consisted of thirteen parts with 128 articles, many of which the United States agreed with and supported. In fact, three principles, which formed the basis of the ICC, were deemed particularly agreeable by the US. The first was the principle of complementarity, which "establishes that the court may assume jurisdiction only when the national legal systems are unable or unwilling to exercise jurisdiction."[136] The second principle dealt with the crimes within the court's jurisdiction, dealing "only with the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole."[137] "The third principle was that the statue should to the extent possible, remain within the realm of customary international law."[138] While the US agreed with the three theoretical underpinnings, President Clinton noted after signing the statute that "significant flaws in the treaty" remained,[139] ultimately preventing him from recommending the treaty to the Senate for their approval. While many disagreements arose during the negotiations, the critical obstacle standing in the way of US support, and the one which proved to be the primary reasons for their years of rejection of this treaty, remained the possibility of US personnel being exposed to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Since this critical disagreement and other lesser obstacles could not be overcome to the satisfaction of the US, Clinton's support for one of the most critical multilateral initiatives of the late portion of the twenty-first century remained illusive.

A main topic of discussion and disagreement was over the preconditions for the exercise of jurisdiction. Motivated by the policy of attempting to avoid ICC investigation or prosecution of American citizens, the United States pushed for a statute that would require the prosecutor to gain consent from the state of nationality in every case. If that consent was not forthcoming, "the ICC would be able to act effectively against nonparty nationals only on the basis of a decision by

---

[136] Arsanjani, "Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court," 24.
[137] Ibid., 25.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Clinton as cited by Brown, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court," 323.

the UN Security Council."[140] Either would have limited the power of the independent prosecutor (a further idea rejected by the American delegation), effectively ensuring the US could prevent any American solider from ever having to submit to the jurisdiction of the court.

Other negotiating governments rejected the US proposal on the grounds it was too restrictive, allowing governments simply to opt out of the ICC if they disagreed with a decision. An alternative put forth by other states was based on the principle of universal jurisdiction, which would have essentially allowed the ICC prosecutor to intervene in any situation or state, "even if it occurred on the territory of a nonstate party."[141] While the US remained strongly opposed, the statute became a compromise between consent of state and universal jurisdiction, requiring the ICC to acquire consent from either the national state (state of nationality of the accused) or the territorial state (where the crime is alleged to have occurred).

Another objection made by the American delegation focused primarily on crimes within the purview of the ICC. Such crimes would include not only genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, but also aggression. The US delegation immediately opposed the insertion of this last act as an international crime worthy of international trial. "The definitions of the first three of these crimes, to be applied by the ICC, have been carefully refined during long and difficult negotiations."[142] Aggression, however, had not received the careful and thorough definitions to which the other three had been subjected. In fact, a definition of aggression would only be defined by the parties after such a time that the ICC came into effect. The United States strongly opposed aggression being considered under ICC jurisdiction primarily because the definition of aggression may have been broadly interpreted and used on the US in a heavy-handed fashion. Having an exceptional position in the current international system, the United States has taken on the task of maintaining the current international order. From time to time, the US may be "the only force willing and able to act against

---

[140] Brown, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court," 326.
[141] Nolte, "United States and the International Criminal Court," 75.
[142] Brown, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court," 327.

aggression and similar threat," and in so doing, may subject itself, more than any other state, to such laws often for the good of the entire international community. The final text, however, ignored American protests allowing the ICC to automatically exercise jurisdiction with respect to all four crimes.

A final objection made by the United States concerned the principle of complementarity. While the United States supported this concept, which "allows any interested state to assert prior and preemptive right to investigate and prosecute…it has balked at the prospect that a panel of international judges might sit in judgment of determinations made by the U.S. legal system."[143] American inflexibility stemmed from the fear that anti-Americanism could infiltrate the International Criminal Court, and make American military personnel targets of international criminal prosecution. The power imbued with the judges or prosecutor could ultimately be used against US nationals or interests, and that was a risk President Clinton was simply not willing to take.

Even though the final statute had included a number of safeguards for the US, including deference by the ICC to national jurisdiction, numerous procedural protections for the accused, and ICC respect for bilateral agreements limiting extraditions to the ICC, the United States remained opposed until the final day of President Clinton's presidency. In a statement released after the signing, President Clinton stated that signing the Rome Statute "reaffirm[ed] our strong support for international accountability," but noted that "we are not abandoning our concerns about significant flaws in the treaty".[144]

Evaluation of US Policy

To what degree was the US' initial unwillingness to sign on to the Rome Statute important in assessing the US' character? Turning to the criteria above, President Clinton's approach to the International Criminal Court was characterized by ambivalence in both form and substance. Initially supporting the notion of a permanent international criminal court, the United States adopted a

[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.

multilateral stance on the treaty. However, once it became known that the other states involved in its creation were prepared to go farther than the US in the court's jurisdiction, independence and powers, the United States retreated to a more isolationist, unilateral position to protect what they perceived as an infringement upon American national interests. Unilateralism, therefore, may not have been the intention, but it did turn into a consequence of a president unmoved or unconvinced by the ideology of multilateralism.

In a formal or procedural sense, the US was supportive of the multilateral endeavor. Historically, in fact, the US had long been supportive of the notion of creating international mechanisms that would prosecute leaders who violate international humanitarian standards of law, including crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes. After World War II, for instance, the United States "led the multilateral coalition that established two international military tribunals after the conflict"[145] – the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. Such sentiment within the US further led to the creation of international criminal tribunals in the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and in Rwanda (ICTR), both established largely as a result of US leadership.

Motivated by the successes of these ad hoc tribunals, there were sustained and vocal calls, both internationally and within the US, for an institution that would be independent, global in scope, and permanent. The United States also seemed initially open and supportive towards the multilateral treaty to establish the ICC. In fact, "President Clinton's public support for a permanent international court was demonstrated on six occasions prior to the diplomatic conference in Rome",[146] and was one of the main reasons the conference opened with cautious optimism.[147] However, despite the US' historical support for humanitarian international law, and President Clinton's initial encouragement of the principle, the United States refused to sign on. It was Clinton's "decision to reject an almost universally agreed-upon project, without invoking generally accepted countervailing national interests, that made the rejectionist attitude of the United

---

[145] Ibid.
[146] Scheffer, "The United States and the Criminal Court," 13.
[147] Nolte, "United States and the International Criminal Court," 73.

States appear as a form of unilateralism."[148] The fact that Clinton would later sign the Rome Statute on December 31, 2000 (his last day in office) did little to combat the rejectionist image the US had acquired over its rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Kyoto Protocol, the Ottawa Treaty, and the ICC. Clinton's decision to decline recommendation of the treaty to the US Senate for ratification signaled that "the United States remained unwilling to accept the perceived cost of institutionalized multilateralism in the form of the ICC."[149]

From a substantive point of view, the US appeared to vary between the two extremes. One the one hand, President Clinton seemed genuinely interested in principles of international prosecution of humanitarian crimes. "In 1995, President Bill Clinton announced his support in principle for the idea of an ICC,"[150] even though there were some objections to the ICC statute both within his administration and Congress. Clinton not only endorsed the idea, but his administration stressed U.S. support could be forthcoming if a court could be constructed if "configured along the proper lines."[151] "The Clinton administration had worked actively to write many protections and procedural safeguards into the treaty and later into supplemental agreements"[152] in hopes Congressional support would follow. On the other hand, when the actual negotiations were underway, American unilateral tendencies increasingly prevailed in the decision-making process.

Clinton's decision to pursue his own American version of the ICC – when his demands were not incorporated into the final version – by either modifying the almost universally adopted statute or by overturning it fully, further substantiates the claim of American unilateralism. Many states had made demands that were not included in the end, but remained committed to the notion of the ICC. India, for instance, demanded that nuclear weapons be considered prohibited weapons, while some Arab and Caribbean states demanded that the death penalty be

---

[148] Ibid., 72.
[149] Brown, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court," 323.
[150] Ibid., 325.
[151] Ibid., 329.
[152] Galbraith, "Bush Administration's Response," 684.

included as a possible sanction.[153] While many such demands were rejected, these states remained willing to compromise and negotiate in other areas, ultimately voting to either adopt the final text (without their demands included) or simply abstaining from the vote. Whereas these states were willing to adopt the ICC concept because they felt it was in the global interest to do so, by strengthening the ideals of humanitarian law, the US was not willing to do so.

National interests, not some theoretically imprecise concept of the global good, guided the American decision-making process. Accession into the ICC would have jeopardized four main categories of core US national interests – protection from illegitimate prosecution, preservation of freedom of action for military operations, preservation of sovereignty and constitutional structures, and continued international recognition of the country's leadership role.[154] Instead of recognizing the possible international interests by becoming a leading member of the ICC, the US ignored them. As Georg Nolte argues, the ICC's "significance extends beyond the institutionalization of international criminal responsibility for individuals: It touches on the kind of world order that is perceived to exist."[155] President Clinton abandoned the Statute of Rome largely because the ICC could not provide the US with guarantees that it would not jeopardize national systems of jurisdiction; in rejecting the Statute, President Clinton not only rejected an international institution, but also multilateralism in general, dealing a severe blow to the current multilateral world order that it had helped create sixty years earlier.

The last form of unilateralism can be found in US demands for differentiated rules of conduct. The US felt that its role in world affairs, its influence and responsibility were incomparable. As David Scheffer suggests, the United States found itself in:

> a global system that…requires [America's] constant vigilance to protect international peace and security. At the same time, the United States has special responsibilities and special exposure to political controversy over our actions. This factor cannot be taken lightly when issues of

---

[153] Nolte, "United States and the International Criminal Court," 73.
[154] Ibid, 84.
[155] Ibid, 72.

> international peace and security are at stake. We are called upon to act, sometimes at great risk, far more than any other nation.[156]

Consequently, the Clinton administration argued the US should not be subjected to the same criminal laws as other states would be, but instead should be considered above such laws. As David Scheffer's words suggest, the American position was becoming increasingly assertive of its perceived inequality before international law. The US did not desire to make the ICC an institution within which it could work and fit realistically into the international system; rather, it demanded "to remain beside or even above the law."[157]

The unyielding position adopted by the US with respect to the ICC appeared to result in the ambivalent approach with respect to the multilateral-unilateral dichotomy. What the International Criminal Court example does illustrate, however, is that under President Clinton, there was an increased willingness to use unilateralism while approaching international treaties and arrangements. While multilateralism did seem to be influential in the initial process, it immediately lost out to concerns regarding national interests and differentiated rules of conduct once negotiations began. Simply put, the United States did not want the ICC investigating or prosecuting any US military personnel involved in international military affairs abroad, and as a result abandoned multilateralism once negotiations failed to secure a completely satisfactory institution.

International Institutions

Clinton's attitude and approach toward multilateralism was similar with regards to institutions. Support for multilateral institutions and multilateral action was inconsistent and selective throughout the 1990s. Clinton's early rhetoric upholding the practice and principles of international institutions conflicted with later unilateral acts taken by his administration. America's failure to pay UN peacekeeping dues, its decision to pull out of Somalia prematurely, the refusal to

---

[156] Scheffer, "The United States and the Criminal Court," 12.
[157] Nolte, "United States and the International Criminal Court," 74.

support UN initiatives regarding an organized intervention in Rwanda, and its continued use of "extraterritorial measures and secondary boycotts against states designated by the Helms-Burton and d'Amato-Kennedy bills"[158] all illustrate the Americans' ambivalent approach to multilateralism. This seemingly contradictory position taken on the issue of multilateralism can be seen in how the US approached the intervention in Kosovo.

Prior to 1998, the autonomous province of Kosovo had pursued largely peaceful demonstrations in hopes of attaining political autonomy against the larger, dominant Serbian republic. Comprised of a large ethnic Albanian population, many ethnic Albanians felt the central Yugoslavian government, dominated by Serbs, was openly and overtly discriminatory and oppressive toward its own Kosovar Albanian minority. The geographically larger, politically dominant, and ethnically homogenous Serbia, however felt that the territory known as Kosovo had been historically a part of the greater Serbian state and were therefore unwilling to cede full independence. As a consequence of the international community's failure to deal adequately with the Kosovo-question in the Dayton Peace Accords, many citizens within Kosovo changed to more aggressive tactics in hopes of attaining the goal.

Formed in 1995, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) "began a low level campaign of violence against Serb police and state officials."[159] It was not until 1998 that Serbia began its crack down on the KLA. "In February and March Serb police carried out raids in the Drenica region of Kosovo, burning hundreds of homes, emptying villages, and murdering dozens of ethnic Albanians."[160] In response, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1160 on March 31, 1998, condemning the use of excessive force by Serbian police and terrorist action by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and imposing an arms embargo on the state of Yugoslavia.[161] However, increasing violence between the two sides eventually led to the death of 60 Serb police in fighting with the KLA. Milosevic ordered an

---

[158] Hoffman, "United States and International Organizations," 346.
[159] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians,* 133.
[160] Ibid.
[161] International Commission on Intervention & State Sovereignty, *Responsibility to Protect,* 110.

all out military offensive in mid July, resulting in more than 2,000 ethnic Albanians deaths, and over 300,000 displaced Kosovars.[162]

The international community's response was similar to its first attempts at inducing peace, in both its demands and its inability to induce compliance. The United Nations, on September 23, 1998, passed Security Council Resolution 1199 (1998), "calling for a cease-fire, withdrawal of most FRY security forces, and talks between the parties in conflict. It also issued a warning about a looming 'humanitarian catastrophe' resulting from the fighting."[163] If these demands were not complied with the Security Council "would '*consider further action* and additional measures to maintain or restore peace and stability in the region.'"[164] However, after the second Security Council resolution, the United States and other European states had become increasingly skeptical of the UN's power to dissuade Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to halt attacks.

Neither Resolution 1160 nor 1199 resulted in sustained peaceful relations between the Former Yugoslav Republic (FRY) and Kosovar populations. Moreover, within a week of passing Resolution 1199, reports of another Serbian massacre resulting in an additional 400,000 refugees fleeing the FYR left the United Nations deadlocked over the issue of use of force.[165] Consequently, the United States sought support through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to enforce the two previous UN Security Council Resolutions. Under threat of military air strikes, President Milosevic signed a ceasefire in October, agreeing to scale-down Yugoslav military forces, and provide amnesty to detained ethnic Albanians.[166]

In January 1999, however, tensions again between the two factions flared. Authorities from the FRY reestablished troops in Kosovo, and allegations were made about renewed attacks by Serbian military forces which left forty-five ethnic Albanians dead in the village of Racak. With the latest cease-fire breached, NATO again threatened Milosevic with aerial bombings of strategic

---

[162] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians,* 133.
[163] Latawski, *Kosovo Crisis,* 7.
[164] International Commission on Intervention & State Sovereignty, *Responsibility to Protect,* 110.
[165] Mandelbaum, "A Perfect Failure," 4.
[166] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians,* 133.

targets if Belgrade did not adhere to a new set of conditions – including NATO deployments in and around the southern province and a future referendum, to be held in three years, on Kosovo's independence.[167] A final diplomatic effort was made in Rambouillet and Paris, from February 6 to 23 and March 15 to 18 respectively, and ended with the FRY walking away from the negotiations.

As a result, on March 23, 1999, NATO began air strikes against the Former Yugoslavia in *Operation Allied Force*, claiming that all diplomatic avenues had been exhausted.[168] Later that day, the United Nations also convened an emergency session of the Security Council. Russia, China, Belarus, and India strongly opposed NATO's actions, which they saw as a clear violation of the UN Charter. However, a draft resolution demanding an end to the air strikes, supported by China and Russia, was defeated 12-3. On June 10, 1999, the 78-day bombing campaign of Serbia ended with Milosevic agreeing to all the NATO's conditions.

Evaluation of US Policy

In many respects, President Clinton's attitude toward multilateralism via international organizations was similar to the US' stance toward international treaties. As the intervention in Kosovo illustrates, the United States was neither unequivocally unilateralist nor entirely multilateralist. On the one hand, the United States did not "go-it-alone" when faced with the opportunity to use force in Kosovo, but instead chose to work through a multilateral institution in dealing with the problem in Kosovo. On the other hand, the US' willingness to use military force outside of the auspices of the United Nations, the only organization given the authority to sanction the use force by its member states, reinforces unilateralist tendencies. Thus, in a formal context, the United States under President Clinton recognized the need to use multilateral means, but in order to meet their foreign policy objectives, the US relied on a more substantive expression of unilateralism.

---

[167] Stiles, *Case Histories in International Politics*, 236.
[168] North Atlantic Treaty Organization press release, March 23, 1999, as cited in *Responsibility to Protect*, 112.

The US decision to rule out unilateral military action, in a procedural sense, appeared to strengthen Clinton's policy of "assertive multilateralism." Under Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the United States took the lead in mobilizing a strong, united international response. "By early March [Albright] had begun a conscious effort 'to lead through rhetoric,' targeting European allies, U.S. public opinion, and her own colleagues."[169] While the US implied that it would consider using military force in Kosovo (and indeed having the capability to act without international support or assistance), it also made it clear it would work through multilateral organizations. President Clinton took the issue of Kosovo to the UN Security Council twice. It was only after the US had been frustrated by the UN's inability to generate a consensus on enforcing either Security Council resolution that the United States turned to NATO. Washington's willingness to subject its foreign policy to the unanimous decision-making process of NATO, and unwillingness to react with a unilateral military response, illustrates Clinton's commitment to formal multilateralism.

However, what Clinton lacked was a consistent substantive multilateral doctrine. The US' dismissal of the universal security organization in favor of a small regional organization for convenience-sake, illustrates the contradictory nature of the Clinton administration.[170] The United Nations Charter, a document largely constructed and agreed to by the United States, provided the Security Council with two important conditions with respect to the use of force in the international realm. Firstly, under Article 24 of the Charter, the United Nations Security Council was accorded the primary responsibility to maintain 'international peace and security.' Secondly, if there were threats to international peace and security, then the Security Council, under the authority of Chapter VII, has the ability to authorize the use of force in defence of this purpose.[171] Therefore, the Charter of the UN gives to the "Security Council only the authority to launch military operations and to empower regional bodies to do so."[172]

---

[169] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 136.
[170] Hoffman, "United States and International Organizations," 345
[171] Wheeler, "Reflections on NATO'S Intervention in Kosovo," 146.
[172] Hoffman, "United States and International Organizations," 345.

With respect to the situation in Kosovo, the first of these procedures was followed. "The Security Council was unanimous that the FRY was committing gross and systematic violations of human rights against the Albanian minority in Kosovo; that these constituted a threat to 'international peace and security; and that the Security Council had demanded a cessation of the violence in three successive resolutions adopted under Chapter VII."[173] What rendered the decision and subsequent action of the United States and its allies unilateral, however, was not waiting for the Security Council to either authorize a UN-sponsored military operations, or empower a regional body to do so. The international system is built on the premise of non-intervention, state sovereignty and the non-use of force; any attempts to override these international norms will be seen as illegitimate if not accompanied by universal or near universal acceptance.

Relying exclusively on NATO, and bypassing the UN Security Council, was more significant than simply "choosing a smoother path instead of the rocky road of an agency in which the Russians and Chinese had a right to veto."[174] The fact that Russia and China publicly threatened to veto any Security Council Resolution authorizing the use of force either by UN or NATO member-states prevented this action from becoming multilateral. American willingness to use force with or without Security Council authorization demonstrates a reluctance to follow the general practices of international law, dealing a serious blow to the ideology of multilateralism as a whole and setting a dangerous precedent. As Hoffman explains, "by not following the procedures of the Charter in a case in which there existed an international alternative is dangerous insofar as it could be used in cases in which there is neither a NATO nor a regional organization capable of filling the void – and in which the United States [or any other state] might want to act alone without having first proved that the UN could not act."[175] Ignoring the important provisions – maintenance of international peace and security and authorizing the use of force – given to the UN by its member states,

---

[173] Wheeler, "Reflections on NATO'S Intervention in Kosovo," 145.
[174] Hoffman, "United States and International Organizations," 345.
[175] Ibid., 345-6.

the Clinton administration's action have not only damaged global interests, by working outside the UN framework, but also the multilateral order the US created after 1945.

The American approach to international organizations, like the Clinton administration's stance towards most multilateral treaties, was mixed. The United States showed a willingness to use multilateral institutions in order to address global concerns, but not to adhere to the rules that went along with them. After one international institution failed to act in the way the US had hoped, Clinton did not abandon multilateralism altogether, even though he was fully capable of taking the "go-it-alone" approach. The decision to bypass the UN Security Council for reasons of expediency ultimately reinforced the unilateral tendencies associated with the United States. It was unwilling to explore alternatives that may have been amenable to the two permanent members opposing the use of force, and, instead, simply found allies in NATO willing to use force. The US' decision to use force with or without UN Security Council approval, consciously or not, dealt a blow to the general principles which support the current multilateral order and the principles of multilateralism. Thus, the actions by the United States should be seen as unenthusiastic unilateralism, a mix of both multilateral and unilateral sentiment.

International Norms

The United States defended their intervention into Kosovo on humanitarian grounds, a justification the Clinton administration resorted to on numerous occasions. Political editorialist/academic Charles Krauthammer even went as far as claiming Clinton's lasting legacy was "uniquely and exclusively" based on humanitarianism. "Uniquely, because no other U.S. administration has undertaken humanitarian interventions (with one exception: the Bush administration in its dying days entering Somalia). And exclusively, because Clinton has done nothing but humanitarian intervention."[176] Interventions in Somalia (1992-93), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1993-95), and

[176] Krauthammer, "Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War," 6.

Kosovo (1999) were all justified by the United States on normative grounds, arguing it had a responsibility to protect those being targeted, each of these examples seemed to reinforce Krauthammer's assertions. While the humanitarian cause was often the professed motivation in each of the four above case studies, Clinton's subsequent actions suggest that humanitarianism may have been more of a pretext, at least in some of these instances, than Krauthammer would have his reader believe. This section will review the Clinton administration's hesitant commitment to the multilateral norm of humanitarianism.

A civil war in Somalia provided the United States with its first opportunity to demonstrate its devotion to a normative driven foreign policy. Ongoing civil strife in 1992 resulted in a massive famine and humanitarian crises that engulfed much of the Somali state. Continuous violence, as a result of various ethnic clans competing for power, precipitated the mass exodus of over 350,000 refugees, resulting in a further 500,000 internally displaced citizens, and an estimated 350,000 famine-related deaths.[177] The United Nations, with the strong support of then President George H.W. Bush and subsequent President Clinton, authorized Somali Operation (UNOSOM I). The stated goal was the facilitation of the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the form of foreign food aid to affected Somalis in hopes of preventing furthering famine-related deaths. The actual implementation, on the other hand, was problematic for a number of reasons. Poor co-ordination between the US and the UN, over-concentration on Mogadishu at the expense of the outlying areas, and general apathy, are just some of the few problems that plagued the UN effort in Somalia.[178] The principle reason, however, that this operation failed was the armed Somali militia's successful obstruction of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to needy Somalis.

As a result, the United Nations began contemplating a shift in the scope of the operation. With extensive US support a second Somali Operation (UNOSOM II) was sent out on 4 May 1993, signaling a move from a humanitarian relief to a

---

[177] von Hippel, *Democracy by Force*, 70.
[178] Ibid.

peace-enforcement operation. UNOSOM II

> was authorized to use force to implement its mission, which included monitoring cease-fires established between the warring factions and preventing any violence; establishing a security environment throughout all of Somalia, including disarming the Somali clans and cantoning heavy weapons; protecting humanitarian relief agents and their equipment; protecting ports and airfields for humanitarian relief deliveries; removing mines; assisting in the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced peoples; and rehabilitating Somalia's political institutions and its economy.[179]

While the initial decision to intervene in Somalia was that of George Bush (Sr.), Clinton was fully supportive, even condemning the former President for not doing enough earlier on in the crisis to relieve the Somalis suffering.[180] However, the mounting death toll among UN members and the Americans' loss of 18 military personnel prompted President Clinton to pull his support and military from the UN operation.

A second example of humanitarian intervention occurred in Haiti, where similar normative grounds were used to justify American intervention in 1994. Shortly after the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1990, Haiti's first democratically elected leader, a successful military coup orchestrated by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras of the Haitian military removed Aristide from power. As a result, by 1992 there had been over 5,000 assassinations, with tens of thousands fleeing Haiti and an additional 300,000 internally displaced as a result of state sponsored violence.[181] No immediate military response was heard from the US. "Presidential candidate Bill Clinton criticized President Bush's Haiti policy for being inhumane and 'appalling',"[182] and during the 1992 presidential election, Clinton committed to a US intervention to relieve the suffering of the Haitian population. This intervention, however, took two years to develop. It was not until the level of human rights abuses dramatically increased that Clinton took the case to the Organization of American States (OAS) to get approval of a

---

[179] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 48.
[180] Ibid., 50.
[181] von Hippel, *Democracy by Force*, 98.
[182] Ibid., 94.

multilateral intervention. "The multilateral force that intervened and ousted Lt. General Raoul Cedras and reinstated Aristide in 1994 was consistent with the new humanitarian orientations of the post-Cold War era."[183]

Having already discussed the war in Kosovo above, the last example this essay will examine the case of Bosnia. By the end of the Cold War, the Yugoslav state had begun to deteriorate with the large provinces of Slovenia and Croatia seeking withdrawal from the Yugoslav Federation. Bosnia, a province comprised of Muslim, Croat and Serb subgroups, held a referendum over the question of political independence. Hoping to receive recognition from the European Union, Bosnia voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence on February 29, 1991. The result brought considerable displeasure from the Serbian population within the Bosnia province, and would instigate a Serbian assault, which had explicit support from the Serbian government, against the breakaway province of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Soon the entire newly-recognized state was engaged in civil conflict, as the Serbian-controlled central government of the FRY "embarked on a program of terror against other subgroups within the Bosnian population."[184]

Again, the then presidential candidate Clinton chastised Bush for ignoring the humanitarian crisis developing in Bosnia. "Clinton indicated that if elected, he would adopt a more vigorous policy, including lifting the arms embargo to aid the Muslims and ordering air strikes to punish Serb aggression and ensure aid deliveries."[185] However, once elected, no action in dealing with conflicts in Bosnia was immediate. It was not until 1995, when there were estimates as large as 250,000 people killed and over 3.5 million refugees fleeing the area, that the international community decided to intervene.[186] Ethnic cleansing, widespread raping of Muslim women, the establishment of concentration camps, and the targeted killings of noncombatants were the means used in Bosnia by Serbs and the Yugoslav army against Bosnian Muslims and Croats, and would later serve as justification for US intervention.

---

[183] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 245.
[184] Ibid.
[185] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 120.
[186] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 248.

Interventions in all four of the above mentioned states were deemed to be humanitarian for two reasons. Firstly, human rights abuses were perpetrated within states that were governed by a central government that had either become unable or unwilling to prevent further abuses. The second reason, and as equally critical in determining whether the intervention is considered "humanitarian," is the degree to which states are motivated by national interests; the more selfless the apparent motivation, the more likely the intervention will be constituted as humanitarian, as oppose to an unjust incursion. In such a view, action is formulated and undertaken for the global good, not out of a concern the power implications that may result. In fact, so important did this later consideration become for President Clinton, that he claimed in the future the only wars the US would engage itself in were humanitarian; "fight[ing] for the oppressed in other countries, not for its own self-interest."[187]

Evaluation of US Policy

If one was to rely on President Clinton's rhetoric alone in evaluating American foreign policy, the case for multilateralism would be rather straightforward. As Krauthammer noted earlier, Clinton's enthusiasm for multilateralism in the form of international institutions, and particularly humanitarian intervention, was a clear indicator for most that Clinton was committed to a multilateralist foreign policy. Drawing such conclusions ultimately required academics and pundits to rely solely, or in large part, on Clinton's words, rather than his deeds, and on his publicly espoused motives, rather than on the true causes. If Clinton talked the multilateralist-talk, the logical assumption was that the United States would be governed accordingly. The adherence to such conclusions neglects not only the differences in substantive multilateral commitments between President Clinton and his rather surprisingly multilateral predecessor in comparison, but equally as important, drawing such a conclusion obscures the rather pronounced similarities that exist between Clinton

[187] Smith and Light, *Ethics and Foreign Policy*, 10.

and his successor. If one evaluates President Clinton's acts in the context of adherence and promotion of international norms, the evidence suggests a considerable distancing from the early post-Cold War multilateralism. Whereas President Bush (Sr.) was committed to both elements (formal and substantive) of multilateralism in various contexts, Clinton's actions in the four case studies reinforce an increasingly ambivalent attitude towards multilateralism, preferring to conform to the more formal or quantitative definition of multilateralism, as opposed to the substantive, qualitative definition.

In all four case studies, Clinton's acceptance and adherence to multilateralism in the formal sense can be found in his desire to both garner international coalitions and respect international authority. Under the United Task Force (UNITAF), the United States forces were augmented by 17,000 military units of more than twenty other states, including Egypt, Botswana, Canada, and Zimbabwe.[188] Approximately 2000 personnel from twenty-seven countries, in addition to the American contingent, comprised the multinational force that intervened in Haiti.[189] Clearly, the United States' desire to establish multinational forces in all four interventions support claims of Clinton's comfort with formal multilateralism. Moreover, in all four instances the United States appealed to appropriate multilateral international organizations for assistance: the Organizations of American States (Haiti), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Bosnia and Kosovo), and the United Nations (Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia). By using international institutions and compiling multi-national forces (MNF), President Clinton was able to claim a multilateralist label, without necessarily adhering to the more comprehensive/substantive aspect that the institution of multilateralism implies.

The humanitarian or the Right to Protect (RTP) norm is multilateral by definition, conforming, as it does to two characteristics of multilateralism itself – general principles of conduct and diffuse reciprocity. With respect to the former, humanitarianism is not selective, but, rather, is based on universal norms of

---

[188] *Department of Public Information, United Nations*, "Somalia - UNOSOM I," http://www.un.org/Depts/ DPKO/Missions/unosomi.htm.
[189] von Hippel, *Democracy by Force,* 103.

application. In theory at least, it is the indiscriminant application of the criteria that leads us to such a definition. The fact that humanitarianism also concerns itself with the global, as opposed to the national, good as well as long-term versus short-term benefits also seems to be consistent with multilateralism. As Mandelbaum notes, humanitarian intervention is "the use of force on behalf of universal values instead of the narrower national interests for which sovereign states have traditionally fought."[190] The argument that violating basic human rights is not only detrimental to the citizens suffering from abuse, but to all other states as well, clearly upholds the principle of diffuse reciprocity. In a theoretical sense, then, the RTP norm is by nature multilateral.

Where the Clinton administration failed to adhere to contextual multilateralism was in the application of the normative obligations this president had set for himself. The fact that US application of the humanitarian norm was neither consistent nor indiscriminate reinforces the earlier claims of Clinton's ambivalence regarding issues of multilateralism. Take for instance the issue of consistency. For a state to be considered multilateral, it must be willing to apply universal criteria to any state, regardless of said state's geographic location, leader or prevailing ideology. This was not the case for the US under President Clinton. Though the Americans defended interventions in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo with humanitarian rhetoric, the United States refrained from intervening on the same ethical grounds in just as many cases. One need only look to "(1) the case of the interethnic turmoil in Rwanda; (2) the ongoing actions of the Sudanese government, including slavery, against the black population of southern Sudan; (3) the religiously based abuse, by the Taliban in Afghanistan, of women (including denial of the right to work outside of the home...) as well as abuse of those males who do not adhere to sufficiently strict practices; and (4) the protracted actions of the Iraqi, Iranian, and Turkish governments against the Kurds since 1991," just to name a few.[191]

In Rwanda, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq, the case could have been made

---

[190] Mandelbaum, "A Perfect Failure," 62.
[191] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 253.

for humanitarian intervention. For one reason or another, no such case was made. In fact, in these four cases where the US abstained from intervention, the human rights atrocities were in most cases comparable in scale, and in some cases were much worse in terms of victims of human rights crimes. Rwanda's death-toll, for example, was over and above all the combined number of deaths in the four instances where President Clinton did intervene. Over 800,000 Rwandans were killed and around one million refugees created after the clashes between the Hutus and the Tutsis,[192] whereas Somalia had 350,000 deaths, Haiti 5,000, Bosnia, 250,000, and Kosovo 2,500. Since the number of deaths was one of the criteria cited as cause, Rwanda should certainly have been considered. As no use of force was undertaken by the US, one must conclude that other factors, including economic and political, superseded the claimed normative ones in the decision to abstain.

As a result of the US' inconsistent application of the Right to Protect norm, this ultimately raises questions regarding previous "humanitarian" interventions. The question with which this thesis is most concerned is whether or not US intervention had been more prevalent in cases where the national interests, as opposed to humanitarian interests, took precedent. An argument could be made that the decision to intervene in places like Haiti and Bosnia had less to do with altruistic moral and ethical pretexts than with the more salient political and economical interests. Would the United States, for instance, have intervened in Haiti if its geographic location were not within rowing distance from the Florida coast? Clinton identified four major factors in deciding to involve the US in Haiti – human rights abuses, support for democracy, stemming the refugee flow, and maintaining U.S. credibility.[193] However, as DiPrizio notes, "A close analysis of the available evidence suggests that some of these factors were far more influential than others and that some key factors *were* left unstated." It seems clear that Clinton's decision to intervene was driven more "by naked political fear – the fear of domestic fallout over continued flows of Haitian

---

[192] Chatterjee and Scheid, *Ethics and Foreign Intervention*, 5.
[193] DiPrizio, *Armed Humanitarians*, 95.

refugees and of the righteous wrath of the U.S. community that supported President Aristide."[194] The economic hardships created in South Florida by Haitians fleeing the island were too problematic domestically, and the primary motivation for Clinton's intervention.

The intervention in Bosnia was equally questionable. Would the United States have continued to put off any use of force in Bosnia had it not been for administrative blunders and the concern for stability in the region? Warren Bass suggests that it was only as a result of "an earlier presidential decision that, should the situation on the ground become chaotic enough to prevent UNPROFOR – the hapless U.N. peacekeeping mission already in Bosnia – from functioning, NATO would intervene to help the blue helmets flee."[195] A "reneging on its promise to NATO would [have] destroy[ed] the remains of its credibility and devastate[d] an already frayed alliance."[196] Knowing this, would the same response have occurred if the conflict were in a region that American interests were not so prevalent? What both the examples illustrate is that humanitarian norms, that Clinton used to justify American actions, were used as a superficial pretext, concealing the real reasons the US intervened in both Haiti and Bosnia. While this is not to suggest it had no validity whatsoever in the decision-making process, but rather the "pretexts' actual significance was markedly less (or at least different) than the spokesmen of the Hegemon"[197] professed it to be. In some instances, the United States fought with the global good in mind, as in the case with Somalia, exhibiting tendencies supporting multilateralism; in others, however, the absence of any national interest left states such as Sudan and Afghanistan to fend for themselves. While Clinton again appeared willing to adhere to the constraints of procedural multilateralism in each of these cases, it was his selective and inconsistent application of international humanitarian norms that has further substantiated claims of increasing US reliance on substantive unilateral tendencies in foreign affairs.

---

[194] Carothers, "Democracy Promotion under Clinton," 15-16.
[195] Bass, "The Triage of Dayton," 99-100.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Pratt and Craig, "Iraq and Hegemony," 33.

President Clinton's stance on the issue of multilateralism was marked by hesitancy and uncertainty. His claims of being led by concerns for "aggressive multilateralism" seemed to be tenuous at best. From his stance on international arrangements and treaties, to working within international organizations and being influenced by global norms, Clinton seemed solely devoted to one form of multilateralism – the procedural, a quantitative, less comprehensive form which allowed a more contextual unilateralism to pervade a great deal of foreign policy. This increasing reliance upon substantive unilateralism would reach its zenith under his successor, President George W. Bush.

George W. Bush

If President Bush's (Sr.) approach to multilateralism could be characterized as moderately committed, and President Clinton's approach as indifferent, then President Bush's (Jr.) attitude towards multilateralism should be considered as hostile. "The George W. Bush administration came to power under the misapprehension that a sentimental Clinton administration had undermined U.S. interests in order to accommodate multilateral institutions."[198] As has been shown above, this proved to be more truthful in his rhetoric, than in Clinton's actual practice. Bush made a number of public indications that his administration would pursue an assertive unilateral approach to international relations, something that both previous presidents had avoided declaring in public, and something that the American public seemed willing to embrace.

While the American trend away from multilateralism certainly was apparent in the Clinton years, though somewhat less so in the Bush Senior years, there were a number of substantial differences between George W. Bush and his predecessors over the role multilateralism should play in the US. Firstly, the move toward unabated unilateralism increased dramatically under Bush. Another noticeable difference was with respect to idiosyncratic factors. Bush offered the international community a "frank unilateralism" that had not been available in

[198] Malone, "A Decade of U.S. Unilateralism?," 31.

"the inconsistent, often two-faced multilateralism" provided by the Clinton administration.[199] A final difference was found in the unilateralism pursued by President Bush – in a number of contexts, both formally and substantively, President Bush not only engaged in passive unilateralism, which was used throughout previous administration, but also an aggressive, active form. The US not only saw value in acting outside the institutionalized process for reasons of national interest, but in a number of instances, the US seemed to ultimately undermine any such multilateral efforts.

International Treaties & Arrangements

The administration of George W. Bush was overtly hostile towards multilateral treaties and conventions. General suspicion of the treaty-based system of international relations pursued by President Clinton, by the Bush administration prompted Richard Haass', the State Department's policy planning director, to call for "multilateralism à la carte."[200] Promising to revisit international treaties on a case-by-case basis, President Bush seemed committed to continue the US' retreat from multilateralism that had largely been initiated in the Clinton era. Instead of committing largely to both formal and substantive multilateralism, as his father had done on numerous occasions, or simply committing to the quantitative form, as Clinton had done, President George W. Bush seemed steadfast in his desire to ignore both forms, and vocally at that. The rejection of countless multilateral endeavors – the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty – and the withdrawal from international conferences in which it was engaged – including the UN Conference on Small Arms Trafficking and the Convention on the Rights of the Child – were clear signals the United States had altered its previous stance on multilateralism. Furthermore, the decision to dispose of the ABM Treaty, rather than replace it with a more comprehensive,

---

[199] Ibid., 35.
[200] Shanker, "US is Not a Loner, Just Choosy," A1.

updated multilateral version, was a clear illustration of the new unilateral style that would direct American foreign policy.

While there were many international treaties renounced by the Bush administration, it was his unilateral decision to withdraw from the ABM Treaty and the subsequent decision to pursue a national missile defence program, that ultimately signaled America's commitment to "go it alone" politics. The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, signed in 1972 between the United States and the Soviet Union, was "widely regarded by the international community as a force for international strategic stability."[201] The ABM treaty effectively limited the development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems, including such programs as National Missile Defence (NMD) for almost three decades. In addition to covering offensive attacks, the treaty included defensive mechanisms designed to negate the potential for an effective missile shield, thereby effectively removing "the deterrent factor for the side possessing the shield, and allow[ing] that side to launch a nuclear 'first strike' without fear of an effective response."[202] In short, from 1972 to 2001, the ABM Treaty effectively "banned all but the most simplistic forms of defence against intercontinental ballistic missiles…prohibit[ed] the use of most radars, space-based sensors, and remote site interceptors" between Russia and the United States.[203]

Ten years after the fall of the Soviet Union, however, the debate over missile defence was revived. The United States demanded that Russia, successor to the Soviet Union, revise the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. "Under U.S. pressure, Russia agreed in 1997 to revise the treaty in a way that would allow the United States to develop a limited version of NMD."[204] During its final months in office, the Clinton administration was pushed by members of a Republican-dominated House to begin looking into the options of a national missile defense system as a result of concerns over the safety of the United States. While "doubts continued regarding the technical feasibility of missile defense," Clinton

---

[201] Jia, "In Search of Absolute Security," 203.
[202] Ewing, "Cornerstone of Stability or Relic of the Cold War?," 787.
[203] John McCann as cited in Hewitson, "Nonproliferation and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons," 412.
[204] Jia, "In Search of Absolute Security," 203.

ultimately left the decision of deployment to his successor.[205] Nuclear strategy and nonproliferation were critically important for the Bush (Jr.) administration, both in the 2000 Presidential campaign and once in office. Motivated by the goal of ensuring the safety of the American people, the Bush administration pursued a program of national missile defense. However, the ABM Treaty remained a legal obstacle to achieving this goal. Still intact and supported throughout the post-Cold War period by both Bush (Sr.) and Clinton, the revised treaty excluded the possibility of an expanded version of NMD.

Dissatisfaction with the ABM Treaty early in 2000 resulted in President Bush's request to Russia for a second round of revisions. President Bush claimed the ABM Treaty was "dangerous" and "anachronistic,"[206] and an instrument which prevented the United States from effectively defending its country and citizens. The Russian's refusal prompted the US to threaten abrogation from the treaty. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced that the United States was determined to proceed with missile defense, with or without support from the international community. "The United States," according to Rumsfeld, "intends to develop and deploy a missile defense designed to defend our people and forces against a limited ballistic missile attack, and is prepared to assist friends and allies threatened by missile attack to deploy such defenses."[207] Secretary Rumsfeld concluded by suggesting "that the Bush administration was determined to proceed with an antimissile defense of United States territory even if it could not overcome the objections from the Russians, the Chinese and the European."[208]

National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice continued in much the same vein in July 2001, arguing that the United States "would pursue its program to build missile interceptors 'whether or not Russia agrees to jointly withdraw from [ABM Treaty].'"[209] On December 12, the President Bush announced United States withdrawal from the ABM Treaty citing national security concerns. President Bush justified his administration's decision concluding, "the ABM treaty hinders

---

[205] Hewitson, "Nonproliferation and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons," 416.
[206] Ibid., 417.
[207] Gordon, "Allies Opposition to Missile Defense," A1.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Rice as cited in Hewitson, "Nonproliferation and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons," 418.

our government's ability to develop ways to protect our people from future terrorist or rogue-state missile attacks."[210]

Evaluation of US Policy

The case of the ABM Treaty and the NMD program illustrates the significant shift that characterizes the current American foreign policy. Under the Bush (Jr.) administration, the United States changed its attitude and practice towards multilateralism in the form of international treaties and arrangements. Whereas Clinton seemed committed to the more formal, ostentatious form of multilateralism, President Bush neither supported the doctrine of multilateralism in his rhetoric or in practice. Withdrawing from most international treaties and arrangements, the US not only demonstrated a willingness to use formal unilateralism, removing itself and ignoring Russian and European objections, but it also showed a willingness to employ substantive unilateralism in its decision to forge ahead with a national missile defence strategy.

The formal unilateral character of the United States in the treaty context can be seen in two main forms: US nonparticipation and withdrawal. Under President Bush, the United States remained opposed to a number of treaties that previous presidents had been unwilling to sign. The Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Convention on Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Protocols to the Geneva Convention have all remained unsigned under the current administration, and, most likely, will remain so for the foreseeable future. President Bush also opposed a number of treaties signed by either former Presidents Bush (Sr.) or Clinton. The United Nations Framework on Climate Change and the International Criminal Court were two of the more prominent examples. Furthermore, the US pulled out of serious discussions regarding the Kyoto Protocol, amendments to the Law of the Sea treaties, and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, thereby dealing further blows to the multilateral establishment. Within the first

---

[210] *BBC Online*, "America Withdraws from ABM Treaty," http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas /1707812.stm.

few months of his presidency, Bush's nonparticipation and unilateral withdrawal from a number of multilateral treaties was a clear indication that the United States was not comfortable subjecting itself, the world's sole remaining superpower, to the constraints of multilateralism.

While ignoring international treaties and international opposition conformed to the passive element of unilateralism, President Bush also displayed a willingness to use the more aggressive form of unilateralism. American withdrawal from the ABM Treaty was due to a perceived conflict with American interests. As Qingguo Jia observes, "the United States is willing to take a multilateral approach on security questions only when other states go along with its policy preferences."[211] International approval on the extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the strengthening of the Missile Technology Control Regime allowed the US to remain multilateral, and thus committed to multilateral treaties.[212] The real test of America's multilateral character under Bush Jr. was to be ultimately determined when international consent was not immediately forthcoming. President Bush's response over dissenting opinions was to pursue American preferences, with or without support from other states. Using "convenient multilateralism," or resorting to multilateralism when the situation proves favorable, but ignoring it when disagreements arise in the international arena, demonstrates an increasing American indifference to multilateralism. States committed to multilateralism use it regularly, not sporadically when national interests dictate.

A key distinction between President Bush and President Clinton on this issue was that Clinton was ultimately torn between "conflicting pressures," wanting to remain cognizant of US' interests, but also "want[ing] to show his appreciation for the value of international accountability for all."[213] The result was a divided commitment – often adhering to procedural multilateralism, while at the same time relying on substantive unilateralism. Bush, for his part, was

---

[211] Jia, "In Search of Absolute Security," 201.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Galbraith, "Bush Administration's Response," 696.

unconcerned with trying to appease the international community, resulting in an agenda dominated by both procedural and substantive unilateralism. Shortly after the US opted out of the ABM Treaty, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John R. Bolton insisted that the move was taken with American interests in mind. He stated, "trying to characterize [US] policy as 'unilateralist' or 'multilateralist' is a futile exercise. [US] policy is, quite simply, pro-American, as you would expect."[214] Moreover, while the ABM Treaty may not have been as relevant as it was in 1972 – with new technological advances, the arrival of increasingly sophisticated non-state actors, and the dissolution of one of the parties to the treaty – the decision to withdraw from the multilateral process, instead of seeking to remake a more relevant and effective multilateral structure for the twenty-first century, is a clear indication of President Bush's commitment to unilateralism.

Furthermore, President Bush's decision to remove the US from international treaties in general, and the ABM Treaty specifically, exemplifies another unilateral characteristic – concern for short-term goals. Ignoring global interests and objections by not only its withdrawal, but also its determination in seeking the implementation of a nation-wide missile defence system, out of US concerns for absolute security was a clear unilateral indicator. Actions made in hopes of attaining this goal, considering only the short-term benefits, may, in fact, have made the quest for security even more elusive. Ultimately, the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty set a dangerous precedent for international law. The most immediate question that comes to mind is: will other states look to emulate the US example with respect to adherence and withdrawal from international treaties when their national interests are in question?

Another significant consequence relates to the current multilateral nuclear nonproliferation regime. With respect to the American withdrawal from the ABM and its proactive policy of missile defence, "the focus has been on overly-narrowly defined national interests at the expense of multilateral efforts to curb proliferation," all the while leaving the current

---

[214] Boulton, *Under Secretary of State*, http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/arms/02012402.htm.

unilateralist approach to erode "important international nuclear nonproliferation norms."[215] Such a scenario has led some scholars to argue that the current administration's actions, while attempting to impede nuclear proliferation, may have exacerbated it instead by stalling any previous "momentum towards significant progress on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation agenda."[216] While President G.W. Bush acted unilaterally with the hopes of increasing American national security, his actions may well have the reverse effect not only for global, but also for American, security.

International Institutions

Under the Bush (Jr.) administration, the Iraqi situation did not initially constitute a threat to US national interest either in the election or immediately after his victory. In fact, both Vice President Gore and Governor Bush had taken similar stances on Iraq – both candidates favored a return of weapons' inspectors and both vowed to work with Iraqi exiles in hopes of unseating Saddam Hussein. It was not until the terrorist attacks of September 11, that US foreign policy changed from a policy of containment, used predominantly throughout the Cold War, to one of preemption. "According to the president, guaranteeing national security called for more than confronting states that harbor terrorists; in addition, the United States would take the steps necessary to thwart 'the world's most dangerous regimes' developing 'the world's most destructive weapons.'"[217] Instead of waiting for threats to present themselves, President Bush claimed he would not "wait on events while dangers gather" but would act preemptively with or without the support of its allies.[218] In fact, after the invasion of Afghanistan, the United States began to implement the policy of preemption into its foreign affairs agenda, and "Iraq's intransigence on disarmament made it the

---

[215] Hewitson, "Nonproliferation and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons," 405.
[216] Ibid., 493.
[217] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 743.
[218] Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, 38 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 133. 135 of 29 January 2002.

administration's first candidate for preemptive treatment."[219]

The weak containment strategy inherited by President Bush in January 2001 proved problematic; "the U.S. government possessed an incomplete picture of Iraq's weapons holding and development (since Saddam Hussein banned the inspectors nearly two years prior), and the sanctions regime, arguably the cornerstone of containing Mr. Hussein, was faltering badly."[220] In order to alleviate (or validate) concerns the Bush administration had about Iraq, the United States, while somewhat unwillingly at first, took their concerns about Iraq to the UN General Assembly on September 12, 2002. President Bush argued that "the history, the logic, and the facts lead to one conclusion: Saddam Hussein' regime is a grave and gathering danger."[221] Claiming the Hussein regime threatened the peace and security of the international community in three ways – the regime's weapons of mass destruction, reputed ties to terrorist organizations, and its continued human rights abuses – President Bush called on the United Nations to act against Iraq for failing, above all, to disarm.[222]

Following President Bush's speech, the United Nation's Security Council began negotiations on a new resolution designed to regain Iraqi compliance with respect to disarmament. Secretary of State Colin Powell explained the three conditions the US regarded as non-negotiable in any future Security Council resolution. "First, the resolution had to state that Saddam Hussein stood in material breach of his obligations as set forth in prior resolutions; second, the resolution had to state what Mr. Hussein was required to do to come into compliance; and third, the resolution had to specify the U.N.'s response if Mr. Hussein once gain failed to comply."[223] While the US made it clear it was most willing to work with the multilateral institution over international concerns with respect to peace and security, it also made it clear that it was willing, if the Security Council was unable to provide such a resolution, to act militarily without

---

[219] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 742.
[220] Ibid., 737.
[221] Bush, *President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly*, http://www.whitehouse.gov/ news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 759.

UN approval: "'[w]e will work with the UN Security Council for the necessary resolutions,' Bush said. But he warned that he would act alone if the UN failed to cooperate."[224]

Together with the United Kingdom, the United States proposed its draft resolution, which declared Iraqi in "material breach" of prior UN resolutions, called for a return to international weapons' inspectors, and required complete disclosure of Iraqi's current arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. France, Russia, and China, however, all opposed this draft resolution, refusing to approve of any resolution that contained language that could be interpreted as authorizing military intervention. The opposing states supported a two-resolution process, the first emphasizing a return of inspectors. "If Iraq rejected this resolution, or impeded the inspections, then under the French proposal, the Security Council would reconvene to consider a second resolution that would prescribe the consequences for Iraq's failure to comply, presumably including the use of military force."[225] If the Iraqi regime failed to comply with this latest resolution, then "all necessary means" would be employed to disarm the state.[226] While it appeared that the Security Council would become deadlocked as result of such strong unilateral rhetoric, after intensive negotiations, the United States relented and agreed to a compromise resolution.

Resolution 1441 passed unanimously on November 8, 2002, was the result of this American compromise. Resolution 1441 found Iraq "in material breach of its obligations," and established an inspection process, giving inspectors "immediate, unimpeded, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any and all" sites.[227] Finally, and most importantly for the United States, Resolution 1441 warned Iraq that failure to comply with the terms expressed in this resolution would result in "serious consequences."[228] The resolution was seen largely as an American compromise in two respects. Firstly, Resolution 1441 did not explicitly authorize the use of force for failure to comply as the Americans had demanded.

---

[224] Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed," 16.
[225] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 763.
[226] *New York Times*, "Latest U.S.-Britain Draft of Resolution," A12.
[227] UNSC Res. 1441 of 8 November 2002.
[228] UNSC Res. 1441 of 8 November 2002.

A second important observation was that Resolution 1441 ultimately, according to the US Ambassador to the UN John D. Negroponte "'contained no 'hidden triggers' or 'automaticity' to use force; the United States had indeed agreed to return to the Security Council for a second debate in the event of Iraqi non-compliance."[229] While appearing as a great victory for the process of multilateralism, optimism soon turned to doubt with respect to Iraqi cooperation.

On February 5, 2003, the US returned to the Security Council to present their case to the member states: Iraq was not fully disclosing its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction to UNMOVIC (the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission) and IAEA (the International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors. When on February 14, "the inspectors returned to the Security Council to report that, after 11 weeks of investigation in Iraq, they had discovered no evidence of WMD (although many items remained unaccounted for),"[230] the United States, the United Kingdom, and Spain began to work on the supplementary resolution. On February 24, this new resolution was introduced, and would have declared, under Chapter VII, that Iraq was in breach of Resolution 1441 and that further action should be taken. After extensive negotiations, both France and Russia announced on March 5, 2003 that they would block any subsequent resolution which authorized the United Nations, or any member state(s), to use force against Iraq.[231] A day later, China stated it too would follow the French and Russian lead in vetoing any such resolution. The Security Council had come to a stalemate, with neither side willing to compromise any further. Consequently, the United States, Britain, and some thirty other states[232] invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003, without the backing of the

---

[229] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 763.
[230] Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed," 17.
[231] Ibid.
[232] The "coalition of the willing" included: Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Hungary,
Iceland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. Schifferes, Steve. "US says
'coalition of the wiling' grows, in *BBC News World Online*,

UN Security Council.

Evaluation of US Policy

While the US intervention of Iraq did exhibit some degree of multilateral compromise and negotiation in the lead-up to the war, the Iraqi case is largely illustrative of American devotion to unilateralism under G.W. Bush. Up until the September 11 attacks, the United States appeared content with relinquishing the internationalist role that was so prevalent with the Clinton administration. However, after the attacks, President Bush's declaration of war on global terrorism (both the terrorist organizations and the states harboring such organizations) shifted its previous isolationist preference to a largely interventionist stance. The United States was now provided an opportunity, simply as a result of its sheer economic, military, and political power, "to shape the world according to U.S. values and interests."[233] In order to accomplish such lofty goals, the United States used multilateralism, not as the end in itself, but as a means of accomplishing their end goal, which in this case was their national security. President Bush adopted a similar multilateral approach toward treaties, but quickly abandoned it once international consent was not immediately forthcoming. As a result, the United States displayed a commitment not only to formal unilateralism (bypassing the UN Security Council) but also to substantive unilateralism (using multilateralism as a means, as oppose to an end).

To act multilaterally, with respect to the use of force, in addressing international concerns for peace and security a state requires approval from the UN Security Council. The UN Charter authorizes the Security Council as the only institution able to sanction the use of force, and in so doing, prohibits any state(s) from intervention without such explicit authorization. "The founding purpose of [the UN] is to peacefully defuse such threats through collective action."[234] Invading Iraq without UN authorization clearly amounts to formative

---

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/2870487.stm.

[233] Ehlert, "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil," 742.

[234] Ibid.

unilateralism, irrespective of the number of countries who support the action. Surprising many by his decision to submit the case against Iraq to the Security Council and showing flexibility in US demands by yielding to the views of the French, the Russians, and the Chinese over two critical issues, ultimately it was Bush's decision to invade Iraq without UN approval that reinforced American unilateral tendencies. After the UN inspectors found no evidence of weapons of mass destruction and France, Russia, and China publicly stated that it would veto any further resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq, the United States simply ignored any further opposition.

While the American confrontation of Iraq without UN authorization supports claims of American unilateralism with respect to form, one may look to the actual policy of preemption, and the notion of multilateral institutions in general, to find evidence US unilateralism also had a substantive component. The Bush administration made it clear on a number of occasions, and through a number of expressions (including members of his administration, public policy, and actions), that it would support international organizations only to the extent that they furthered US national interests. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was one of the first in Bush's administration to make it clear that the US was more than willing to use unilateralism if the situation required.

In her essay in *Foreign Affairs*, Dr. Rice confirmed the administration's unease in subjecting its foreign policy to the whims of international institutions. She argued that "multilateral agreements and institutions should not be ends in themselves."[235] US national interests were of central importance and therefore "notions of international law and norms" or "institutions like the United Nations" should remain secondary considerations.[236] She concluded by indicating that the United States would replace the over reliance on "'humanitarian interests' or the interests of the 'international community'"[237] with "national interest." Rice's essay, thus, highlights a number of principles that underlie the ideology of unilateralism: the application of selective or convenient multilateralism and the

---

[235] Rice, "Promoting the National Interest," 45.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.

rejection of global, or UN, interests that conflict with US interests, and American willingness to "go it alone."

American public policy at this time also clearly expressed affection for the ideology of unilateralism. The National Security Strategy, for instance, on the one hand professes a US commitment to multilateral institutions such as the UN and NATO, while at the same time explicitly makes room for "coalitions of the willing" to "augment these permanent institutions."[238] By inserting "coalitions of the willing" into the National Security Strategy, implemented in June 2002, the United States allowed itself to ignore institutions preventing America from achieving its goals. A second example of the Bush administration's adherence to substantive unilateralism is the national strategy of preemption. The UN Charter permits the use of force only in self-defence and only "if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations." America's policy of preemption violates this multilateral norm, permitting the US to strike an "imminent threat" first, and to thereby forestall or prevent a hostile attack by an enemy.

Over the course of President George W. Bush's first term in office, the United States challenged the United Nations on a number of issues, a decision which had a significant effect on the institution itself, and on multilateralism. President Bush stated, "If the United Nations doesn't have the will or the courage to disarm Saddam Hussein and if Saddam Hussein will not disarm…the United States will lead a coalition to disarm [him]."[239] Secretary Powell, often seen as one of the sole supporters of the United Nations in this administration, also made a similar pronouncement. In testimony before the House Committee on International Relations, Powell stated that "if the United Nations is not able to act and act decisively – and I think that would be a terrible indictment of the U.N. – then the United States will have to make its own decision as to whether the danger posed by Iraq is such that we have to act in order to defend our country and to defend our interests."[240] Repeated claims, by Bush, Powell, and others, that the

---

[238] The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*.
[239] Bush as cited in Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed," 16.
[240] Powell, "The Administration's Position With Regard to Iraq," http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/13581.htm.

United States would not be bound by UN decisions had clear and profound ramifications on both the current multilateral order and multilateralism in general.

Instead of searching for a compromise with those states opposed, the United States ignored calls for additional time to allow inspectors to search the Iraqi state, and went ahead with a unilateral use of force in March 2003. Aside from the obvious damage American action against Iraq committed, ultimately "contributed to the weakening of the UN's authority to serve as a single clearinghouse for the use of force in the Post-Cold War world,"[241] there is also an equally significant unforeseen damage that may have occurred. States may use the precedent set by the United States to justify any other automatic resort to force without consulting multilateral institutions. Instead of respecting the sole jurisdiction granted to the UN by member states with respect to the use of force, states may now choose to ignore it, leaving many states to question the relevance of the global institution.

International Norms

Promoting the development of democratic practices and forms of government abroad has been a foreign policy goal of the United States since its inception. From Ronald Regan's Westminster speech in 1982, the infrastructure of democracy – equality before the law, free speech and other civil liberties, private property, and elected representation – and its promotion have been fundamental goals of US foreign policy in successive administrations.[242] The rationale behind the normative strategy of democracy promotion was that by promoting freedom and democracy, a more peaceful relationship would ensue, beneficial not only to the US and Americans, but to all states and all peoples. Effectively, the world becomes a safer place the more democracies exist. In the last few years, however, with the presidency of George W. Bush, there has been a dramatic increase both in rhetoric and action regarding the actual promotion of democratic institutions and values.

---

[241] Stepanova, "Unilateral and Multilateral Use of Force," 196.
[242] Koh, "On American Exceptionalism," 1498.

Initially, President Bush and his administration were not enthusiastic proponents of such value-laden policies. During the 2000 presidential campaign, Bush "made it clear that [he] favored great-power realism over idealistic notions such as national building or democracy promotion."[243] However, after the attacks of September 11, the promotion of democracy soon became a central pillar of the Bush Doctrine. US officials and policy experts soon began to change their policy regarding the support of foreign regimes; specifically, the US began questioning the value of supporting autocratic regimes in the Middle East. Whereas these states once were able to prove "effective bulwarks against Islamic extremism, the national origins of the September 11 attackers made clear that these nations are in fact breeders…of extremism."[244] Such facts left many in Washington drawing causal links between the practice of authoritarianism and terrorism. Thus, one way to combat terrorism was for the United States to adopt a proactive, aggressive policy of democracy promotion.

The adoption of this value-infused foreign policy, while not unheard of in US history, is noteworthy in two respects. Firstly, the dual norms of democracy promotion and forceful democratic development, whether used as a pretext in the US intervention Iraq or elsewhere in the Middle East, have been increasingly relied upon to justify American actions. Not only is the inclusion of normative considerations understandable in the context of US national interests, but also in a global sense as well. Generally speaking, "democracies are inherently more friendly to the United States, less belligerent to their neighbors,…generally more inclined to peace",[245] and more concerned with human rights than non-democratic states. As such, some liberal academics have not only been increasingly less critical, but some have supported the move toward a normative foreign policy.[246] The second factor of note, has been the variety of forms which the Bush administration has utilized in an effort to succeed in democratic development – including economic incentives, diplomatic persuasion and militaristic

---

[243] Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," 84.
[244] Ibid., 91.
[245] Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism*, 15.
[246] Michael Ignatieff and jean Bethke Elshtain are two such liberal scholars that come to mind.

intervention.

Through the launching of a number of democracy-promotion initiatives, the United States has relied on economic incentives for states to convert to democracies. The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) is one such example. Set up as a development assistance initiative, the MCA rewards and encourages non-democratic states to become democracies.[247] By measuring a state's performance on sixteen democratic indicators, a state may be able to apply for foreign assistance through this system. Over the last year, Congress has authorized $1 billion in aid. "The president has requested $2.5 billion in 2005, and is committed to seeking $5 billion for 2006."[248] By solidifying and supporting the democratic system in countries selected to receive assistance, and by withdrawing financial aid where states have not lived up to their commitments once given MCA assistance, the Millennium Challenge Account not only makes democracy more attractive initially, but also makes reversion to a previous system that much more unappealing.[249]

The US' commitment to the policy of democratic enlargement, however, has not relied solely upon financial persuasion, but also coercion, in the form of interventions, intercessions, and diplomatic pressure. According to the National Security Strategy, released in 2002, President Bush made it clear he would usher in a new "American internationalism" rooted in liberal principles. He argued that:

> The United States possesses unprecedented – and unequaled – strength and influence in the world…[And] the great strength of this nation must be used to promote a balance of power that favors freedom…The United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere…America must stand firmly for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women; religious and ethnic tolerance; and respect for private property.[250]

President Bush's acknowledgment, that the United States would use its military

---

[247] Dobriansky and Carothers, "Democracy Promotion," 143.
[248] Dobriansky, "Advancing Democracy," 75.
[249] Ibid.
[250] The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America.*

strength to install democratic practices and forms into undemocratic regimes, was substantiated in a number of instances through the Bush's first term in office. American military interventions in Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), and Haiti (2004) were defended on the grounds that, among other things, that there was an absence of democratic practices such as free assembly, civil liberties, and free and fair democratic elections in these nations.

In Afghanistan, under the leadership of the Taliban's Sheikh Omar, none of the previously mentioned democratic practices were permitted. The Hussein regime in Iraq was in many ways similar to Afghanistan. With the censorship of political dissent, a state-run media, and a complete disregard for human rights, the Hussein regime completely neglected democratic convention. Haiti, on the other hand, had experience with democracy but had fallen into corruption. The United Nations had intervened in 1994, under President Clinton, with the hopes of restoring democratic rule after a military coup. However, ten years later, concerns over the democratic nature of Haiti was thrown into question. President Aristide was criticized by President Bush for "his failure to adhere to democratic principles,"[251] in an election widely criticized as seriously flawed and failing to adhere to democratic standards. Sporadic violence and civil unrest threatened to plunge the fledgling democracy further into peril early in 2004, a situation resulting in the United State's intervention.

While some critics may be skeptical about the democratic justification used in defence of American intervention in either Afghanistan, Iraq, or Haiti it is difficult to dispute the initial democratic progress made in both political rights and civil liberties. According to *Freedom House's* annual survey on political rights and civil liberties, US interventions appear to be making progress in both Afghanistan and Iraq. With US support, for instance, under President Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan has extended its control and reduced the power regional warlords wield. Afghanistan has also established a liberal constitution, conducted its first presidential election on October 9, 2004, and increased Afghan's personal

---

[251] Statement by the United States Press Secretary, "Statement on Haiti," http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/ releases/2004/02/20040228-2.html.

autonomy.[252]

In the short time that Iraq has been governed in absence of Saddam Hussein, it too has seen similar democratic progress with respect to civil liberties and democratic rights. While not without its difficulties, brought about largely by insurgency groups within the state, democratic principles are increasingly becoming prevalent. Freedom of expression is for the most part respected, political organizations, with the exception of the Baathist Party, are allowed to organize freely, and the establishment of a liberal interim constitution clearly represents progress in the process of democratization.[253] While there still remain some undemocratic practices, with, for instance, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) being virtually unchallenged, democratic elections took place on January 30, 2005, and the transition is currently underway. While these democratic achievements are clearly in their infancy, and it may be too soon to see how the populations, both accustomed to authoritarian regimes throughout much of their respective histories, will adapt to these foreign practices, there is room for optimism.

Evaluation US Foreign Policy

There have been a number of interpretations and analyses conducted on the experiments being conducted in both Iraq and Afghanistan. On the one hand, such action can be seen as having a direct association with substantive multilateral principles. Encouraging democratic practices and forms of governance, it is argued, is not just a "made in the US" venture, but is reflective of liberal, international, and cosmopolitan principles. Liberal principles, including both civil liberties and political rights, whether linked to peace or not are certainly consistent with prevailing international views, further reinforcing their connection with the notions of multilateralism. In fact, some commentators suggest there are essential humanitarian principles behind the norm of democratic enlargement, and that regardless of the state(s) espousing them, must be supported. Scholars such

---

[252] *Freedom House*, 2004 Report on Afghanistan, http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/ 2004/countryratings/afghanistan.htm.
[253] Ibid.

as Jean Bethke Elshtain, Sebastian Mallaby, and Michael Ignatieff argue that policies of democratic promotion and nation-building are the only solution in addressing "the most exigent matter before the international community" today – securing fundamental human goods.[254] The United States, Elshtain argues, has a moral responsibility to advocate individuals around the world "who cannot defend themselves because they, like us, are human beings, hence equal in regard to us."[255] The multilateral character of the policy of democratization is thus evident – it is not narrow or selfish in scope, its effects are beneficial globally, and is supported on cosmopolitan principles.

On the other hand, Bush's use of democratic enlargement principles, espousing cosmopolitan and idealistic motivations, may simply be coincidental; far from being motivated by a global concern for international well being, the US' adherence toward democratic development has been utilized solely with the notion of national self-interest in mind. In fact, a careful analysis of US foreign policy under the Bush administration reveals a continued adherence to unilateralism – in both content and form – one that has been built on the previous two post-Cold War administrations. With respect to the formal aspect, the United States pursued the policy of democracy promotion unilaterally by failing to acquire international consensus. In Iraq, for instance, the United States made three arguments in favor of a UN sponsored intervention. Firstly, the US argued that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, thus posing "a great and gathering threat;" secondly, that Iraq had links to terrorism, specifically, to bin Laden's al Qaeda; and finally, that the people of Iraq were suffering from a brutal and tyrannical dictatorship.

It was this third and final claim that the United States would focus its efforts in hopes of providing justification later in the war's aftermath, after the claims that Iraq had WMD and terrorist links appeared not to be as credible as first believed. The liberation of the Iraqi people, "replacing one of the world's worst tyrannies with a pluralist democracy, that would in turn set a shining

---

[254] Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror,* 166-67.
[255] Ibid., 168.

example for (or warning to) other states in the region"[256] soon became the explicit professed motivation and objective of the US invasion. The United States argued that the Iraqi regime was autocratic, oppressive, and run by a tyrant who had repeatedly violated his citizen's human rights, and as a result, must be removed for the good of not only the Iraqi people themselves, but also internationally as well, putting on notice those leaders who governed in a similar fashion. Despite these arguments, the United States failed to garner international support. Unwilling to compromise or negotiate, it withdrew its support for multilateralism and intervened with the "coalition of the willing."

While the US may not have utilized multilateralism in a formal context, the next, more significant question concerns whether or not unilateralism was employed in the substantive form of US democracy promotion. As argued above, in order to be considered in accordance with multilateralism in its substantive form, the norm must be applied consistently and without prejudice. While recent interventions in the Middle East have been justified on democratic grounds, other areas of the world have been neglected on the same grounds. In repeated instances, not only has the United States been selective in its application, but when it did intervene, "US security and economic interests usually trumped an interest in democracy."[257]

Addressing the first portion of this claim, regarding US selectivity, one simply needs look to all authoritarian or semi-authoritarian states the United States has not only tolerated, but supported over the last four years. As Carothers notes, President Bush has sought closer ties and enhanced security cooperation with a host of such unsavory regimes including: Algeria, Bahrain, China, Egypt, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Syria, Qatar, Uzbekistan, and Yemen.[258] While dictators such as Sheik Omar and Saddam Hussein faced the wrath of the US military complex, others remain; with some even receiving US support and nothing more than "strong urges" from the US administration to introduce some democratic measures. Dictators such as Pakistan's General

---

[256] Pratt and Craig, 33.
[257] Carothers, "Promoting Democracy," 96.
[258] Dobriansky and Carothers, "Democracy Promotion," 144.

Pervez Musharraf, Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov, and Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev have all repeatedly ignored polite US requests to reform, while remaining supported and in power due to their continued cooperation with the US led war on terror.

Another dictator who has profited from the inconsistent application of the policy of democracy promotion has been Malaysia's leader, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. Whereas the Clinton administration treated him as a pariah, publicly decrying his attacks on Jewish segments of the Malaysian population, his unwillingness to follow the advice of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and his suppression of basic human rights, the Bush administration now considers him an ally.[259] The fact that "Mahathir has made himself useful to Washington by arresting Islamic militants, sharing intelligence, and cooperating in other ways with an antiterrorist campaign,"[260] has not only resulted in warmer relations between the two former adversaries, but has also garnered praise from President Bush. Ignoring his undemocratic regime and neglect for human rights, the US fully supports Mahathir, calling him "a force for regional stability," and "a model of economic development that has demonstrated tolerance."[261] In fact, a further sign of support for President Mahathir was witnessed during a visit to the White House in 2002, his first visit since 1994. Malaysia, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, then, are all illustrative of the selective and discriminating nature of America's normative agenda.

A second observation that can be made regarding the US policy of democracy promotion is that US action is motivated more by US security and economic factors than altruistic considerations. The emphasis on democratic practices and human rights appears a clever pretext rather than a guiding foreign policy principle, evidenced in its use against some and not for others. Take for instance the case of China. China's recent threat of invasion against Taiwan, its poor record on human rights, and resistance toward political democratic reform

---

[259] Lobe, "Mahathir gets White House 'Rehabilitation'," http://www.atimes.com/sc-asia/DE17Ae03.html.
[260] As cited in Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," 90.
[261] Ibid.

would seem, according to Bush's normative foreign policy, a perfect candidate for democratic reform. President Putin of Russia is in a similar position, as is his Chinese counterpart. Attacks on Chechnya and indifference toward maintaining a free press have led to further questions regarding Russia's commitment to democratic advancement. However, US relations with both countries are much improved than at the beginning of Bush's presidency. With China and Russia, the mutual beneficial economic relationship and their desire to "win" the war on terrorism are valued over concerns for democratization. In other words, democracy promotion has been a selective and inconsistent, key quality of a unilateral normative policy.

Ultimately, democracy promotion has been "reduced to an instrumental strategy, for producing political outcomes favorable to U.S. interests,"[262] losing all value and legitimacy in the process. While President Bush did not reject multilateralism outright, he certainly made it clear that it would be used as a tool, not as an end. President Bush's actions regarding international treaties, multilateral organizations, and international norms signify clear qualitative shifts away from multilateralism. Furthermore, what the evidence seems to suggest is that contemporary American attitudes – including those of the President, Congress, and the public – have certainly become more amenable to unfettered unilateralism.

These findings seem to suggest a number of conclusions, two of which will be the focus of the final section of this thesis. Firstly, and most importantly, there does appear to be an increasing willingness, on behalf of the American executive branch, to adopt unilateral strategies with respect to post-Cold War security policy. A second finding which must be further examined herein is the apparent linear trend toward decidedly unilateral policy. This chapter has sought to demonstrate the evolution of American foreign policy from 1988 to present: beginning with a renewed enthusiasm towards multilateralism, a trend not witnessed since the end of the Second World War, with President George H.W. Bush, to an ambiguous stage with Clinton, and finally to a clear unilateral

[262] Ibid.

preference when dealing with international affairs under George W. Bush.

SECTION III

The above findings would appear to suggest that America's turn toward unilateralism in the post-Cold War era was not brought about by some sudden, unexpected cataclysmic moment, which most critics have readily identified as the election of George W. Bush. Contrary to the belief that President G.W. Bush's recent actions have represented "a major turn away from the long postwar tradition of multilateralism in American foreign policy,"[263] the empirical evidence would appear to suggest that the move toward a unilateral security policy has been a gradual, almost linear trend. This trend toward a substantive unilateral doctrine began with slight movements from President Bush (Sr.), to an ambiguous unilateralism with President Clinton, to finally, a clear, assertive form within the current Bush (Jr.) administration. It is this gradual trend in the post-Cold War paradigm that will be the focus of this third section. While the debate is ongoing, with no clear singular causal explanation existing, the preceding discussion has hinted at a number of underlying factors.

This chapter will focus on the five factors that have contributed most directly to the post-Cold War era's gradual move toward unilateralism. The factors that have had the most significant affect on shaping policy towards multilateralism include: the Americans' hegemonic position, the perceived international challenges to US security, the US' domestic institutional structure, the changing nature of the institution of multilateralism, and finally, America's singular political culture. While some of these five factors are steeped in a long American tradition, for this paper to fully explain the effects each has on American political life, it will, at times, be necessary to draw on pertinent information regarding these five factors from all relevant historical periods. While the end of the Cold War had become the impetus that resulted in changes to American political choices, some of the factors that will be identified precede the

[263] Ikenberry, "Multilateralism in Decline?," 533.

Cold War period, requiring, in some cases, brief historical analysis.

America's Power Gap

A traditional theory in explaining unilateralist behavior by the United States, and great powers in general, revolves around power. Powerful states tend towards unilateralism, weaker states multilateralism. As Max Boot has argued, "Any nation with so much power always will be tempted to go it alone. Power breeds unilateralism. It is as simple as that."[264] This argument has found support in a number of works during the twentieth century. In *The Anarchical Society: A Study of World Order*, Hedley Bull insists that in order for a rules-based system to function, as opposed to a system based on power, the "essential condition" is "the existence of a balance of power."[265] "It is clear," Bull argues, "that situations in which one state has a position of preponderance are situations in which that state may be tempted to disregard rules of law…[and] may have the option of disregarding the rights of other states, without fear that these states will reciprocate by disregarding their rights in turn."[266]

It is precisely this commonsensical approach, however, that has left a number of academics unconvinced, arguing such a claim "vastly simplifies the intellectual debate in the United States."[267] While reducing the multilateralist-unilateralist dichotomy to a single causal explanation, such as the power structuralist account, is indeed problematic, the commonsense approach that structural-realists provide to explain America's fascination with unilateralism in the post-Cold War era should not be dismissed out of hand. In fact, what will be made clear in this section is that American unipolarity, or the belief that the United States is the single pole of world power,[268] is one of the, if not *the*, most important underlying factor behind the recent move toward unilateralism in US security policy.

The decline of American multilateralism is the consequence of several

---

[264] Boot, "Doctrine of the 'Big Enchilada'," A29.
[265] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 108.
[266] Ibid.
[267] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 73.
[268] Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," 29.

power-related factors. "First, the United States has turned into a unipolar global power without historical precedent,"[269] providing the state the capability to act unilaterally. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the bipolar world which had dominated the global landscape for over forty years gave way to a unipolar one, with America left as the only superpower. The economic, political and military power wielded by the United States in this situation is without historical precedent. 'Declinist' theorists such as Paul Kennedy argued incorrectly, in this instance, that the United States would face what all empires confronted: "an erosion in its global position that would over time turn the United States from a superpower into what Richard Rosecrance of the University of California had earlier called an 'ordinary country."[270] Rather than the international system converting into a multipolar system, as was predicted by Kennedy, the US, who started the decade as the only superpower, continued to distance itself from all other states, growing more powerful in virtually all areas.

Economically, between 1990 and 1998, the United States' gross national product grew by 27 percent, Europe's by 16 percent, and Japan's by 7 percent.[271] Moreover, between 1992 and 2000 the US economy performed exceptionally well; US stocks soared, unemployment numbers dwindled as tens of millions of new jobs were created, and the American deficit began to recede.[272] Militarily, the United States not only spent more than the next fourteen countries combined on defence, but also had a vastly superior army in terms of military technology, spending eighty percent of the world military research and development.[273] Politically, American institutions, laws, and values have remained as attractive as ever. The United Nations has become increasingly "Americanized" in their adoption of "universal" ideals linked to the founding principles of the United States – democracy, economic liberalism and respect for human rights.

Second, the material advantages possessed by the United States ultimately

---

[269] Ikenberry, "Multilateralism in Decline?," 538
[270] Cox, "International History since 1989," 122.
[271] Ikenberry, "Multilateralism in Decline?," 503.
[272] Cox, "International History since 1989," 122.
[273] Ikenberry, "Multilateralism in Decline?,"503.

provides it with opportunities few other states have to resist multilateralism. Whether the United States is a strong supporter of multilateralism or not, whether it believes the world should be governed by shared international principles, norms and rules or not, the Americans' unprecedented position of power endows them with certain policy options. If dominant powers find multilateralism constraining, if their resolutions are diluted in the search for consensus, or if the process simply takes too long, dominant powers have a variety of methods at their disposal, including unilateralism. Weaker powers, on the other hand, if constrained by multilateralism, often have little recourse, having neither the capability nor the opportunity to avoid building consensus. The United States has been the only power in modern times that can "afford (at least in the short term) to bypass consultations, enforce its will, or absorb the costs of acting alone"[274] on any number of security issues. The case of Iraq illustrates this point.

Labeling Iraq a pariah and threatening to intervene with or without the support of the international community would probably have meant little coming from any one other than United States, but as a result of the power gap between the US and all other states, the international system simply gives the US more opportunity to act unilaterally. The United States initially used conventional multilateral routes, but when these failed, resorted to unilateral means to deal with Iraq. As of September 2004, Pentagon officials claimed the United States had spent over $102 billion in the invasion and reconstruction of Iraq, averaging over $4.8 billion per month[275] with an additional $80 billion reportedly being requested by the Bush administration in February 2005.[276] In addition to the issue of financing such an enormous military venture and for the reconstruction effort, the US military, at its peak, had stationed 150,000 troops in Iraq. While the US did form a coalition of over thirty states, if it had to, it had the capacity to provide all necessary ground troops in Iraq if it was so required. States such as France, Russia, Germany, or Japan, simply do not have that option, severely limiting the

---

[274] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 10.
[275] *Bloomberg.com Website*, "Iraq War Cost $102 Billion," http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000087&sid=asC2oZAGbhZE&refer=top_world_news.
[276] Bash et al., "Bush Wants $80B more for Iraq, Afghanistan," http://www.cnn.com/2005/ALLPOLITICS /01/24/bush.war.funds/index.html.

option of either bypassing multilateral means or resorting to unilateral tactics. The mere fact that the United States is the only power that can fully afford – politically, financially, and militarily – to conduct military actions outside its own borders, an opportunity not many other states enjoy, has done two things: these asymmetries in power have not only greatly reduced the risk of other states resorting to unilateral tactics but have also, at the same time, greatly increasing the likelihood of the US resorting to unilateral means.

A third consideration regarding the disparity of power between states highlights a fundamentally different mentality between the powerful and weak. Steeped in the realist tradition is the belief that international politics is driven by an endless struggle for power through national interests. From this, the great-power explanation for unilateralism argues that both unilateralism and multilateralism are strategies played depending on a state's position in the international system. Powerful states use unilateralism, not simply because they can afford to, but because power and military might is the most effective tool in getting one's way in the world. Weak states, however, unable to compete with power politics, attempt "to make a virtue out of weakness."[277] When states are weak, they practice the strategies of weakness – claiming an aversion to war, extolling the virtues and ameliorating effects of commerce, appealing to international law, and so forth – to get their way in the world.[278] While great power states rely on their power advantage, it is conversely in "the interest of the small powers…to lessen their power disadvantage by binding the great powers to legal, alliance and other multilateral institutions."[279] A state's national character, its current ideology, and its domestic structure are all factors that have little effect on state actions; a state's disposition towards policies of unilateralism or multilateralism is determined by the power it holds. Put simply, states gravitate toward their national interests; for great powers, insuring that their interests are met may mean acting unilaterally, for weaker powers, acting in its interests may be to try and "lock in" the powerful, which ultimately put limits and restraints on

---

[277] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 13.
[278] Ibid., 10.
[279] Holloway, "U.S. Unilateralism at the UN," 364.

the leading state(s) but also could potentially gain more "by operating within institutional rules and obligations than it could otherwise achieve with its brute power."[280]

Both current and historical examples of the United States seem to lend credence to this great power theory. As Robert Kagan notes, "there is nothing timeless about the [US'] present heavy reliance on force as a tool of international relations, nor about the tilt toward unilateralism and away from a devotion to international law."[281] In fact, during America's early years, multilateralism was an ever-present characteristic of US foreign policy. "American statesmen of the late eighteenth century, like the European statesmen of today, extolled the virtues of commerce as the soothing balm of international strife and appealed to international law and international opinion over brute force."[282] During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the United States claimed to abjure the power politics practiced in Europe, claiming an aversion to war and the military as the means to settle disputes. However, while the US seemed against the use of military power to subject their will on those less powerful then themselves, this same nation had resorted to such tactics in Mexico and the Philippines in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Clearly then, America's fascination with unilateralism has not been a relatively recent development.

Even America's Founding Fathers recognized the role power played in the international system, in fact they were

> well versed in the realities of international politics. They could play by European rules when circumstances permitted and often wished they had the power to play the game of power politics more effectively. But they were realistic to know that they were weak, and both consciously and unconsciously they used the strategies of the weak to try to get their way in the world.[283]

It was not until the United States had enough power to play on an equal field with the Europeans that the former abandoned the constraining egalitarian mantra of

---

[280] Ikenberry, "State Power and the Institutional Bargain, 52-53.
[281] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 8.
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid., 9-10.

international law and multilateralism. In the twenty-first century, the United States has acted and continues to act in a similar fashion that all powerful nations have acted historically – through a system which favors power-based politics. It is important to recognize that this shift in position by the United States – from weak to strong – has worked in the opposite direction in the case, for example, of Europe – from strong to weak. Now that Europe is relatively weaker, the states included therein have adopted the multilateral cause, one with which they were relatively unfamiliar until the early twentieth century.[284] According to this line of argument, European hostility towards American unilateralism is more reflective of self-interest rather than principle, but should also be seen as pragmatic; a temporary condemnation until it can reestablish its "hard power" position in the world.

As noted before, the commonsensical approach put forth by this argument has its share of critics. John Van Oudenaren, for instance, claims "this argument does not explain why the United States was the consummate multilateralist at the height of its power in the 1940s but then turned unilateralist after the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union more than restored its earlier dominance."[285] However, realists can advance a persuasive argument to answer this critique. Firstly, while the creation of the multilateral postwar order was constructed by United States in the 1940s, many have mistaken this for proof that the US embraced substantive multilateralism. An argument could be advanced that the US' willingness to act multilaterally after the Second World War was more strategic than idealistic in its motives.[286] In desperate need of allies after the fall

---

[284] While some may consider the Concert of Europe a clear multilateral endeavor, it would be difficult, at least by today's standards, to conclude that the Concert was an unequivocal display of European multilateralism. The Concert could not reflect the central tenets of multilateralism – indivisibility, general principles of conduct, or diffuse reciprocity – on a consistent basis. The Concert of Europe, as Inis Claude Jr. suggests, became a "hegemony of the powerful," referring special status and responsibility to only the most powerful states, and contracting some of the most basic elements of the current multilateral system. While the establishment of a Concert system can be seen as a significant moment in terms of both "the techniques of diplomacy" and the development of multilateral organizations, attempts to classify the Concert as an example of Europe's commitment to multilateralism may be problematic, due both to its elite membership and unequal decision-making capabilities.

[285] Van Oudenaren, "Unipolar Versus Unilateral," 72.

[286] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 78.

of the German Reich, the United States needed all the allies that it could muster to fight the Communist threat. In order to construct a common strong Western front, supporting multilateral institutions, norms, and treaties was a necessity, even for a state as strong as the US. As put by Dean Acheson, a leading architect of the postwar era, "support for the UN was nothing more than an 'aid to diplomacy,'" a necessary step to build up the alliance and defeat the Soviets.[287] Self-interest, in other words, was indistinguishable from idealism and the constraints of multilateralism were deemed an acceptable concession for the cause of Western unity. The United States had constructed a multilateral mirage during the Cold War period, consolidating support from current allies while at the same time enticing Soviet satellite states to defect.

However, the end of the Cold War not only ended the hostilities between the US and the Soviets, it also marked an end to the generous, multilateralist foreign policy that the United States had followed to keep its allies on-side. Strategically, there was simply no reason "for the United States to have maintained the same degree of generosity in its foreign policy as it had during the Cold War, the same commitment to international institutions, the same concern for and deference to allies."[288] The international circumstances had changed, which ultimately "meant few[er] concessions to international public opinion, less deference to allies, [and] more freedom to act as the United States saw fit,"[289] in other words, a reversion to a unilateral foreign policy. America had little incentive to keep the French, Germans, or Chinese content, as it once had to, after the defeat of the Soviets. The two doctrines of self-interest and idealism could once again be separated, and the United States could act and influence outcomes the way that great-powers had traditionally done – through power. As the United States began to further separate itself – economically, militarily and politically – throughout the 1990s, the increasing power disparity allowed the United States to gradually reduce its multilateral commitments. As the economy improved and the US was certain that the Soviet military threat had been completely eliminated,

---

[287] Ibid., 79.
[288] Ibid., 82.
[289] Ibid., 83.

only then could it begin to forgo multilateral agreements without fearing reprisals. It is, therefore, not unexpected that the United States has gravitated toward unilateralism at a steady rate since the end of the Cold War. Thus, not only can the great-power theory refute Van Oudenaren's claims, but it can persuasively explain not only why the United States has become orientated towards unilateralism, but also why that trend has increased with each successive administration.

The Structural Threat

The unilateralist tendency exhibited by the United States in the post-Cold War era can also be explained by a second structural factor. Threats often have a way of dictating security policy for states – the US is no exception. During the Cold War, for example, the Soviet threat helped determine the multilateral path the United States ultimately chose to take. After the Second World War, the US had a number of options to face the threat posed by the Soviets. The first option to keep allies on-side was coercion. Coercive domination, used almost exclusively by the Soviet politburo to keep its allies onside, was antithetical to American values and would have been difficult to administer with an ocean separating it from the European continent. A second option could have seen the United States simply "go it alone" against the Soviets, ignoring friendly advice and criticism in favor of unrestrained freedom in the decision-making process. The problems with abandoning allies were too numerous to be truly considered, both from a political and economic perspective? Allowing states such as France, Britain, and West Germany to be dominated by the USSR ultimately would have had dire consequences for democracy and liberty. From a strategic perspective, the only true policy option for the US was to act in concert with its allies, working together to contain the Soviet threat. The only way this appeared feasible was through multilateralism.[290]

As a result of this strategic imperative, the international system witnessed the adoption of a whole range of political, economic, and military

---

[290] Ibid., 76-83.

measures embodying the concepts of indivisibility, generalized principles of conduct, and diffuse reciprocity. From security cooperation with Western states, through organizations such as the UN, NATO, and OAS, to strategic cooperation with China through rapprochement in the early 1970s, the "American strategy during the Cold War often consisted of providing more to friends and allies than was expected from them in return."[291] Multilateral efforts were even made towards the Soviets on issues of nuclear non-proliferation, most notably through initiatives such as the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaties (SALT), and Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), in hopes of averting a nuclear confrontation.

After the Cold War, however, the conditions in the international system changed dramatically. The absence of the Soviet threat, one which had guided so much of US foreign policy from the early 1940s, disappeared, ultimately changing not only the international structure, but also the means employed in dealing with future threats. In the new era, threats to American security declined, and any threat that did arise could not dominate US agenda as had the former. Rogue states, non-state actors and transitional states fundamentally differed from the nuclear threats that had influenced the multilateral order established in the 1950s. It was this lack of a central, established threat – one that could so completely threaten America's vital interest – which dictated the way in which the US dealt with the world.

The perceived new security threats (or lack thereof) had at least three possible consequences for American multilateralism. The first possibility was that the US' commitment towards multilateralism would grow, in both nature and scope. Since the United States no longer had to concern itself with the ubiquitous threats posed by the Soviets, constraining itself via international agreements, organizations and norms did not pose the same problems that such options had been merely a year or two before. The fall of the Soviet empire could have also loosened the US' commitment towards multilateralism, allowing the US to return to isolationism. Charles Krauthmamer, in *The*

---

[291] Ibid., 77.

Unipolar Moment, written late in 1990, predicted that the United States would see a resurgent American isolationism, a desire to withdraw entirely from the international consensus that had characterized the last five decades. In fact, in response to the US' creation of a more conducive environment for democracy, liberty, and capitalism, some critics called for its withdrawal from the international scene, claiming "that the time for heroism is passed."[292]

However, it was the third option the US ultimately adopted. Effectively, as the security threats declined, so too did the incentives for multilateralism. American allies were no longer needed. During the Cold War, foreign policy was determined with the goal of ensuring Western states remained unified. While there were always disagreements, "the cracks were always healed, because everyone agreed that while disagreements were inevitable, fissures were dangerous."[293] After the Cold War, however, there was little need to preserve the cohesive "West," which in turn allowed the US to dismiss foreign opposition to its various policy choices – options which had previously garnered European input and consent on decisions such as foreign interventions and arms buildups. "The existence of the Soviet Union and the international communist threat had disciplined Americans and made them see that their enlightened self-interest lay in a relatively generous foreign policy, especially toward Europe. After the end of the Cold War, that discipline was no longer present."[294]

With security threats less significant in the post-Cold War context, issues less conducive to multilateralism progressively began to take precedent internationally. "During the Cold War, military interventions and proxy wars were hard wired to the central problem of global security. Now they float more freely, drifting into limited police actions, humanitarian gestures, and stabilization at the periphery."[295] Whereas nuclear weapons in Cuba were seen as a clear security concern during the Cold War, nuclear weapons in Pakistan today are a

---

[292] Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," 29.
[293] Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, 80.
[294] Ibid., 81.
[295] Kennedy, "Background Noise?," 55.

much more debatable concern.[296] During the 1950s, intervention in the Korean peninsula was seen as worthwhile from a political and military perspective because US national interests were threatened. Interventions today, whether it be in Bosnia, the Great Lakes region in Africa, or Haiti are much more contentious, largely because there is no clear infringement upon state interests, not only within the United States, but throughout much of the world as well. What constituted a threat to American national interests during the Cold War has become vague and indistinct today, ultimately resulting in a decreased reliance upon multilateralism to deal with such problems. Why work through multilateral channels when the problem is either not worth solving or not interesting enough to sustain the attention of the rest of the participants. Simply put, as security threats began to become optional in the post-Cold War era, so too did acting multilaterally.

With no overwhelming security threats, a diverse set of ethnic, cultural, political, religious, economic interests began to overwhelm foreign policy agendas throughout the world, leaving little consensus between states over what has to be done. Whereas one state may regard the situation in Kosovo as a threat to international peace and stability, another may consider the situation in the Great Lake region of Africa a greater threat, while a third may consider neither of these situations significant enough to warrant international action. Furthermore, the nature of threats ultimately allowed for more varying options. The United Nations became less important, simply because it was no longer the only organization to which a state could turn. A state could chose to act through NATO, the European Union, or the Organization of American States. In the case of the United States, elite forces could be employed to remedy a number of situations, including regional conflicts or humanitarian assistance. Multilateralism is not impossible in the modern era, it just becomes more difficult to achieve.

Up until September 2001, unilateralism arose as a consequence of a

---

[296] The most significant reasons that Cuba posed a great a threat as it did was not only a result of its close proximity and its ideological underpinnings, but also its relationship with the Soviet Union. While Cuba's acquisition of nuclear weapons would still be considered a threat to the United States, the likelihood that it could dominate US foreign policy as it did in 1962 without Soviet support – politically, economically, and militarily – is rather hard to accept.

unipolar international system that lacked a clear security threat. "The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon appeared to open a new chapter in relations between the United States and its partners."[297] Security Council Resolution 1368, passed one day after the attacks, not only condemned the attacks, labeling them a threat to international peace and security, but also referred to the US' inherent right of self-defence.[298] Further evidence of an apparent shift in US policy toward multilateral security cooperation appeared one week after the attacks with Security Council Resolution 1373. Under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council adopted "a US text stigmatizing the harboring of terrorists and setting out detailed measures member states were mandated to implement to prevent financing of terrorism from within their borders."[299] The United Nations was not, however, the only international organization that the United States used in the immediate aftermath of this crisis. NATO member states invoked Article 5 of the NATO Treaty – the first time in history the article had been activated – authorizing a collective military response to the act of aggression.[300] The Americans' decision to work within these institutions in addressing the problem of international terrorism, and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan, appeared to substantiate the claims that the international threat of terrorism would halt the US' increasing trend toward unilateralism.

The reemergence of an overwhelming threat initially led to the belief that the United States would again embrace the practice of multilateralism as it had done successfully in the Cold War period, trading a system of constraints for the services of its traditional allies. This, however, was not the strategy the US employed against terrorism. What the September 11th attacks did was not only solidify the unilateralist path the United States had been on since the end of the Cold War, it also accelerated it. As Robert Kagan correctly asserts, "America did

---

[297] Malone, "A Decade of U.S. Unilateralism," 33.
[298] UNSC Res. 1368 of 12 September 2001.
[299] Malone, "A Decade of U.S. Unilateralism," 33.
[300] Clement, "Selective Approach to Multilateralism," 403.

not change on September 11th. It only became more itself."[301] While the United Nations Security Council and NATO both appeared to be leading the charge on international terrorism, it had been the United States who was actually in control. "In Afghanistan, the United States has shown a clear preference for unilateral military action without the support of allies."[302] The American's effectively limited the engagement of partners not only in constructing the objectives (both stated and unstated) but also in actually conducting the military operations. The US has rebuffed substantive control by any ally or international organization in order to avoid any foreign political constraints in the conduct of US action. The Bush administration had never suggested it would spurn the concept of working within the confines of the UN – no state, hegemonic or otherwise, would turn down the legitimacy that the UN provides – all it stated was that it would not compromise, negotiate, or alter its demands.

The United States has never been unwilling to work within the multilateral structure, *if* it was able to get the result it demanded, and after the September 11th attacks such an opportunity arose. It was not so much that the United States sought out multilateralism, as it was the Europeans attempted to make the multilateral route the more attractive for the United States. The French newspaper *Le Monde*'s assertion "We are all Americans now" seems to articulate this sentiment best.[303] It was not the case that the US had actually reverted to multilateralism, in fact far from it. Europeans sympathized with the unilateralist approach the Americans took against Afghanistan, and while certainly not condoning the "go it alone" approach the US adopted, most states did feel the US had the right to defend itself, and consequently muted their criticism. Unilateralism seemed concerned not so much about the number or significance of the threats prevalent in the post-Cold War era, as it was about the nature of those threats. The Soviet threat was from another state. It was tangible, easily identifiable, and motivated by self-interest, thus it was easy to target and strategize against. Terrorism, on the other hand, has no easily identifiable border,

---

[301] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 85.
[302] Clement, "Selective Approach to Multilateralism," 403.
[303] Colombani, "Nous sommes tous Américains," A1.

is not particularly predictable, is difficult to target, and is motivated by different factors. The threats of the post-Cold War era have ultimately determined the means that are required to combat them, and for the United States, that has lead not only to a return to unilateralism, but an acceleration towards that ideology as well.

Multilateralism's Changing Nature

A third, and often neglected determining causes of the US' retreat from post-Cold War multilateralism, is the evolution of the institution of multilateralism. While a number of academics have covered the historical evolution of multilateralism as a concept,[304] relatively few have attempted to analyze the important ramifications this has had on US security policy. The post-1945 multilateral order, which had been in place until the mid 1990s, was governed by national interests, and constrained by two traditional principles of international relations – firstly, states were the primary actors within the world; and secondly, state sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected. As a result, US politicians and policymakers, while not enthusiastic about the constraining character, were capable of justifying to the public, media, and Congress, that working within multilateral confines would not jeopardize American interests.

However, as the international system began to change dramatically with the fall of the USSR, so too did the composition of multilateralism. Traditional principles which had formed the post-war multilateral order consensus in 1945 were fundamentally challenged by the new ethos of international relations, contributing to what Dolan and Hunt have called the 'new multilateralism.'[305] The new multilateralism consists of three main tenets, including the growing influence of non-state actors, the emergence of the human security doctrine, and finally, the increasing preeminence of human rights over the traditional principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention. Robert Cooper has used the term

---

[304] See for instance Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution;" or Ruggie, *Winning the Peace*.
[305] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 394.

"post-modern system" in reference to an international system increasingly governed by international institutions and international law, as opposed to the modern system which has been dominated by state sovereignty and force.[306] As the "new multilateralism" continues to evolve further away from the original post-1945 version, the more increasingly uncomfortable the US becomes with the post-modern conception, and the more steadfast its attempt to hold on to the unilateral methods that have served it in the past.[307]

At the conclusion of the Second World War, multilateralism had been constructed largely out of the American vision, ensuring the resulting practice could be at worst tolerated, and at best, aligned with US interests.[308] "The initial American postwar goal – articulated first by Roosevelt in the 1941 Atlantic Charter – was to lock the democracies into an open, multilateral…order jointly managed through new institutional mechanism."[309] Postwar institutions established by the United States were created along traditional ideals. Firstly, states were the central player in international relations, therefore would be the only participants invited into international organizations, such as the UN and NATO, and considered in the reconstruction effort, through the Marshall Plan. Moreover, while states were the central player in the international system, negotiations tended to be "top-down," "reflecting the international power structure, with the US, Russia, and China leading the negotiations."[310] Aside from the lesser-powers relegated to a "follow the leader approach," non-state actors, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), though always in existence, were effectively excluded from the negotiation process. Multilateralism, thus, was dependent upon states, and most often the great powers; if leading states chose to ignore it, there was little an NGO or a less powerful state could do.

A second characteristic of traditional multilateralism was the

---

[306] Cooper, *Breaking of Nations*, 26-44
[307] Chinkin, "Bully, Good Samaritan or Iconoclast?," 38.
[308] The argument that constructing a multilateral order has been used as a way of advancing US interests has been persuasively argued in Ikenberry's, *After Victory,* particularly chapter 6.
[309] Ikenberry, *After Victory*, 165.
[310] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 392.

personification of the established international norms of the Cold War, which at the time, revolved around state sovereignty and territorial integrity. Principles of state sovereignty and noninterference effectively constrained how broad multilateralism itself could extend and were reflected in governing international doctrines. Take for instance the United Nations Charter. Both state sovereignty – or the recognition that states have to recognize no higher authority than themselves and their governments have exclusive jurisdiction over their borders[311] – and non-intervention – the doctrine that states were prohibited from direct involvement within a state by an outside actor to achieve a preferred outcome unless given consent by the host state [312] – are recognized in Article 2 (7).[313] Multilateralism, in most cases, entailed the defence of both traditional principles when violations occurred. The above discussion points to the constructing of a postwar multilateralism that was neither intrusive nor demanding, and one which essentially ensured to the rest of the world that the US would remain (at least rhetorically) committed to the institution of multilateralism.

However, with the end of the bipolar system, the peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union, the proliferation of ethnic nationalism, and the globalization of finance and production,[314] the effects of the end of the Cold War were numerous and often unexpected. While dramatic systemic changes were underway, theoretical and conceptional ways of comprehending the world also began to change – including what composed multilateralism.[315] Academics began to distinguish between 'old multilateralism' (interstate domination, 'top-down' negotiations and the defence of sovereignty and territorial integrity) – all qualities which ensured that the emergence of substantive challenges toward the status quo would be prevented – and 'new multilateralism.' Increasingly, multilateralism began to challenge the state-centric multilateralism in a number of different ways,

---

[311] Taylor, "The United Nations and International Order," 341.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Article 2 (7) states: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII."
[314] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 394.
[315] Ibid.

each drawing the ire of the political elite in Washington.

One of the first noticeable changes in the new multilateralism was the emergence of new actors in the negotiating and decision-making process. As previously noted, Cold War treaties, such as the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), were largely a reflection of the international power structure, with powerful states critical in the creation of most international treaties and arrangements.[316] When the new international system arose, however, political space opened for previously marginalized actors to effect change in the international system.[317] Non-state actors, such as nongovernmental organizations and social movements became increasingly free to pursue multilateral initiatives without the consent or approval of the powerful states. While NGOs have been present for hundreds of years,[318] their role has largely consisted of providing information and consultation to states. After the fall of communism, however, NGOs essentially transformed their role to active and involved participation in the international negotiation process that, up until the early 1990s, had not existed.[319] Since that time, both social movements and NGOs have evolved from virtually no role in setting the international agenda to one of "growing activism and influence…in international politics…[and] the diplomatic process."[320]

Such changes were witnessed during the 1997 Ottawa Treaty to ban anti-personnel land mines. The international effort to ban antipersonnel land mines largely arose as a result of the increasing influence of nongovernmental organizations.[321] "Rather than acting at the fringe of negotiations, the International Committee of Red Cross and the many national campaigns of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines were integral to the negotiation process – this was a 'bottom-up' process compared with the CCW process,"

---

[316] Ibid., 392.
[317] Ibid., 395.
[318] Authors such as Mari Fitzduff and Cheyanne Church have traced back some of the first NGOs to the early 1800s during the abolition of slavery in Britain.
[319] Anderson, "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines" 92.
[320] Keating, *Canada and World Order,* 220.
[321] See Williams and Goose, "The International Campaign to Ban Landmines;" and Anderson, "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines."

which was considered a 'top-down' approach.[322] All in all, a coalition of more than 1,200 NGOs and social movements came together to form the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), seeking a universal, comprehensive anti-personnel landmines ban treaty.[323] What the Ottawa Treaty represented for both less powerful states and non-state actors was a precedent for future multilateral negotiations; actors that had remained on the fringes of negotiations during Cold War negations could no longer be ignored in the multilateral process. Effectively, what was witnessed in Ottawa was that "social movements challenge the notion that rights, obligations, and identity are most appropriately bound up with the nation-state;"[324] a notion which frankly put a traditional, state-centric state like the United States on the defensive to the new, more egalitarian, inclusive multilateralism.

A second characteristic of the new multilateralism, and one which also received little tangible support from the US, has been the emergence of the doctrine of human security. Human security, as an approach, "focuses upon the importance of the insecurities facing people rather than governments or institutional agencies, human security is concerned with transcending the dominant paradigmatic orthodoxy that views critical concerns of migration – recognitions (i.e. citizenship), basic needs (i.e. sustenance), protection (i.e. refugee status), or human rights (i.e. legal standing) – as problems of interstate politics and consequently beyond the realm of the ethical and moral."[325] The prioritization of viewing security concerns as 'individuals qua persons', as oppose to 'individuals qua citizens' (that is towards their state),[326] has become increasingly popular with many industrialized Western states and resulted in claims of an expanded security agenda. Increasingly, threats to human security are taking the forefront in the international arena.

Threats to human security can take many forms and, as a result, issues

---

[322] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 393.
[323] Anderson, "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines," 105.
[324] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 395.
[325] Graham and Poku, *Migration, Globalization and Human Security*, 17.
[326] Krause and Williams as cited by Graham and Poku, *Migration, Globalization and Human Security*, 17.

ranging from labour standards (economic/health security), to child rights (community security), to environmental degradation (environmental security), to small-arms trade (political security), have only recently become included in the expanding international security agenda. In 1998, then Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy noted, "'Our basic unit of analysis in security matters has shrunk from the state to the individual. This human security lens produces new priorities – everything from countering terrorist bombs to child labour and climate change. These issues have now become the daily concern of foreign ministers and governments.'"[327] As a result of the increasing emphasis on threats to human security, a number of multilateral treaties develop as a result, including the International Criminal Court (ICC) statute, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – all illustrative of the increasing international emphasis that non-traditional security threats have been given in the post-Cold War era.[328]

However, as the nature of multilateralism shifts toward principles of human rights and human security, the doctrine of human security also fundamentally challenges old conceptions of multilateralism and the traditional guiding principles of international politics – most notably state sovereignty and non-intervention.[329] While the beginning of the post-Cold War era witnessed the defence of traditional principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, such examples have increasingly given way to inventions over principles of human rights. Only a few years later, however, these same principles, which had formed the criteria for international multilateralism, were violated in favor of human rights principles in both Bosnia (1994) and Kosovo (1999). Beginning in 1992 with the intervention into Somalia, there has been a progressive "shift in emphasis away from state-centric security

---

[327] Axworthy as cited by Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 223-4.
[328] Foot, "Domestic Supremacy in U.S. Human Rights Policy," 96.
[329] Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 224.

concerns to the individual", internationally.[330] As Lloyd Axworthy has argued, "sovereignty has become more diffuse, with a state's treatment of its own citizens now clearly recognized as a legitimate concern of the international community."[331] As such, the promotion of human security has questioned not only the legitimacy of those traditionally held principles, but also the states that continue to promote such notions in their foreign policies.[332]

The transition of 'old' multilateralism, from a negotiation dominated by the few powerful states, governed around traditional principles of state sovereignty and nonintervention, to a 'new' multilateralism, one that has opened up to new, previously marginalized actors that are now advancing a new expanded security agenda based largely on individual rights as opposed to state rights, has not been a shift that the US has embraced. In fact, many academics have failed to appreciate the effect that the changing nature of multilateralism has had on the US' turn toward unilateralism in the post-Cold War era. One reason the United States has been uncomfortable with "the growing activism and influence of non-governmental organizations in international politics"[333] is that it no longer allows the US to monopolize the multilateral agenda. During the Cold War, the United States, Russia, China, and to some extent, Britain were allowed to completely dominate international multilateral processes, whether it be within international organizations, such as the United Nations, or during international negotiations such as START I or the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. While the United States remains the dominant player in the international arena today, its ability to dictate what will and will not be on the agenda in international negotiations has been severely diminished by not only non-governmental organizations and social movement organizations, but also small and medium power states that had been the traditional followers rather than global leaders.[334] Whereas old multilateralism had allowed the US "to prevent the emergence of substantive changes to the status quo, which hamstrung those states

---

[330] Ibid.
[331] Axworthy, "Canada and Human Security," 449.
[332] Keating, *Canada and World Order,* 224.
[333] Ibid., 220.
[334] Dolan and Hunt, "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process," 393.

that pushed for tangible reforms" internationally, ensuring American national interests were not jeopardized by multilateral initiatives, the new multilateralism removes both the control and certainty that US policymakers had grown accustomed to. Simply put, the US lost its control, and as a result, multilateralism has become a more interventionist, demanding endeavor with the addition of new actors in the international negotiation process.

The US' retreat from multilateralism is also influenced by the redefinition of security in the post-Cold War era. Multilateralism's increasing association with human security and individual rights, and subsequent distancing from traditional conceptions of state-centric security have contributed to the US' increasing ambivalent attitude toward multilateralism. While this may be appear to be anomaly based on the fact "the United States has helped establish and enforce global human rights standards through rhetorical disapproval, foreign aid, sanctions, military intervention and even multilateral negotiation,"[335] there are reasonable explanations for such a move. One of the most acknowledged is that the United States has remained traditionally protective of its national sovereignty. The idea of "committing itself to the domestic application of binding international legal standards for human rights" simply does not appeal to most political elites in Washington. As "Lincoln Bloomfield has observed, 'For many non-Americans, the most important human rights are not those that American regard as paramount.'"[336] For instance, the US provides relatively few protections towards welfare rights, labour rights, and rights against cruel and unusual punishment, which is an area that garners a great deal of international attention and support, while at the same time "guarant[eeing] exceptionally broad constitutional protections for expression, property freedom from improper search and seizure, and the right to bear arms," an area that the international community does not consider as important as the former.[337]

The US' "long tradition of reflexive opposition to international jurisdiction over US interests; [and] a magnification of sovereignty concerns

---

[335] Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 345.
[336] As cited in Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 353.
[337] Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 353.

generated by exceptionalist rhetoric about US "indispensability,"[338] has largely put the US at odds with the new internationally conceptualized multilateralism. As multilateralism continues to broaden its scope, providing states with a human rights framework on which to rely, the US has turned toward unilateralism in order to retain their sovereignty and "resist the prospect that the US Constitution might become subordinate to international treaty law and the possibility that the international covenants might award new and sweeping powers to the federal government to the detriment of [US] states' rights,"[339] a fact that has made state legislators and Congress men and women suspicious of most forms of multilateralism.

Another reason that the changing nature of multilateralism has reinforced the US' continued commitment towards unilateralism is that because of the expanded agenda of NGOs, multilateralism has become increasingly committed to humanitarian interests as opposed to national interests. In *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros Boutros-Ghali seemed to publicly codify the more active multilateralism – laying out ways of strengthening the United Nations as an organization and establishing two standards the UN expected states to meet (order and justice) by pursuing four actions: preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping, and post-conflict building.[340] Multilateralism, thus, results in a more demanding, more intrusive, and more risky (both politically and personally) venture – one that has made the US reassess its willingness to commit. In the end, acting unilaterally cannot only be done, but also may be less risky, less expensive, and less politically damaging.

By jeopardizing the US' control over their domestic affairs, without providing some sort of exemption to the rules,[341] multilateralism has become a risk that the US has shown it is increasingly unwilling to take. Furthermore, as this post-Cold War multilateralism has became increasingly accepted by the rest of the international community, the frequency of its use has begun to increase. As

---

[338] Brown, "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court," 333.
[339] Foot, "Domestic Supremacy in U.S. Human Rights Policy," 95.
[340] United Nations, *An Agenda for Peace*, 5.
[341] Stipulations which had been requested by the American delegations in both the ICC negotiations and the Ottawa Convention, but failed.

witnessed in the first decade since the Cold War, the frequency of "like-minded" states and other nongovernmental organizations attempting to utilize initiatives that reflect this new multilateral consensus, has been with an increasing US reliance upon unilateral action. Until either multilateralism reverts back to its original intention or US culture shifts to match many of its international counterparts, US ambivalence (and in some cases hostility) towards multilateralism will remain a characteristic of US foreign policy.

Decentralized Domestic Structure

A fourth determinant of America's recent return to unilateralism can be found in its decentralized domestic structure. "In comparative perspective the U.S. political system is exceptionally decentralized, with the consequence that a large number of domestic political actors often must approve many major decisions."[342] Enshrined in the US Constitution is the establishment of the executive and legislative branches of government as equals in controlling foreign policy. One legal expert has even gone so far as to remark that the American Constitution "expressly divided foreign affairs powers among the three branches of government, with *Congress*, not the president, being granted the dominant role" (emphasis in original).[343] It is the structural separation of powers and a shared foreign policy-making mandate which makes it difficult for the US to assume multilateral obligations.[344]

One of the major players involved in these major decisions is Congress. From a legal standpoint, the role of Congress in American foreign policy is clear. The Constitution outlines three areas that can affect foreign policy – treaties, war, and money. While the president has the power to sign international treaties, ratification depends upon Congressional approval. In order to secure ratification, two-thirds of Congress must advise on and consent to an international treaty – a number higher than in nearly all other advanced industrial democratic states,

---

[342] Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 358.
[343] Koh, *The National Security Constitution*, 75.
[344] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 8.

which use either unicameral majority or executive decision.[345] "That this separation of powers could complicate U.S. multilateralism became clear in the fate of the League of Nations."[346] Advanced by President Wilson, the post-WWI order was one based on the principles of international law, collective security, national self-determination, and free trade, culminated in the establishment of the first truly global international institution as detailed in the Treaty of Versailles. The Republican-dominated Senate rejected the international treaty and refused American participation, pointing, as a consequence, to an underlying factor in America's apparent preference for unilateralism.

From a theoretical standpoint the role Congress has is unmistakable, but how and if that theoretical role is put into practice is much less certain. Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempt to address both the global economic crisis and the concept of collective security via international organizations, most notably through the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions after the Second World War, is one instance where Congress allowed the President's agenda to continue unimpeded.[347] Senate acquiescence on the United Nations, something it did not do during ratification on the League of Nations, displayed the Senate's readiness not only to accept some degree of international constraints, but also to defer to executive decision periodically. Ultimately, what these two examples demonstrate is that Congress possesses a great deal of control over America's commitment (or lack thereof) towards multilateralism. On the one hand, a compliant Congress may relinquish its role and strengthen executive powers and preeminence in area of foreign policy creation, allowing a decidedly multilateralist president to advance his agenda unimpeded. From the late 1930s to the early 1970s, "the pattern of presidential preeminence and congressional deference characterized foreign policy making."[348] Under Roosevelt, for instance, caused by the crisis of the depression and the subsequent war, executive powers grew exponentially; as in most times of national crisis, Congress deferred

---

[345] Wallace, "U.S. Unilateralism: A European Perspective," 358.
[346] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 8.
[347] Ibid., 9.
[348] Carter, "Congress and Post-Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy," 108.

important decisions to the president, in order to both make governance simpler and unify the country. Such powers remained largely intact until Nixon and the Vietnam War brought about a reassertion of Congressional power in the mid 1970s, a shift that has remained largely untouched.[349]

On the other hand, Congress can also choose to be confrontational, obstructing or fundamentally altering a President's agenda, as has been the case throughout the early post-Cold War period. With the cessation of the Cold War hostilities, Congress effectively regained the prominent position it was constitutionally guaranteed, and its resurgence altered the multilateral character of US security policy. Aware of its decreasing role throughout the Cold War period and "angered by changes in the international system that [had] pushed international organizations forward as an attractive mechanism for addressing many"[350] emerging problems, Congress was able to effectively reestablish its role now that the significant threat had subsided. In numerous instances during the first post-Cold War decade, Congress used its constitutional powers to restrain the president's agenda by delaying, modifying, and rejecting multilateral initiatives.

During the 1990s, Congress delayed a number of key pieces of international legislation, delays which were of particular importance in reinforcing the international image that Congress remained adverse towards multilateral participation. Two of the more telling instances of such were the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), both of which were delayed years by Senate delay tactics. START II, the addendum to START I – which had called not only for a sixty percent reduction in America and Russia's total nuclear arsenals, but also for an agreement to relinquish all multiple warhead ICBM missiles – was signed in 1993. However, "congressional conservatives concerned about denuding America's nuclear capabilities were implacably opposed to the agreement,"[351] subsequently stalling the treaty's ratification until 1996. The Chemical Weapons

---

[349] An argument could be advanced that such power may be shifting back to the president in response to the September 11th attacks.
[350] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 20.
[351] Wittkopf et al., *American Foreign Policy*, 102.

Convention, also signed in 1993, was met by similar Congressional obstructions. It was only "following a prolonged and acrimonious debate, [that] the U.S. Senate ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in April 1997;" a full four years after it was signed.[352] While in both instances Congress eventually saw the "usefulness of treaties in the arms control and disarmament field," it was only after Congress had been "persuaded that [each were] clearly in the American interest" that it agreed to ratification years later.[353]

The second tactic employed by Congress was the modification of legislation, a tool used to constrain multilateral commitments thoughtout the 1990s. President Clinton's attempts to enlarge NATO membership from 1994 through 1997, a seemingly uncontroversial multilateral proposal, seemed to confirm Congress' willingness to manipulate multilateral initiatives. So concerned were US negotiators to appease the Foreign Relations Committee and its chairman, Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina), that Clinton excluded the candidacies of Slovenia and Romania. While both states were supported by the majority of NATO member governments, Clinton's decision to exclude both Slovenia and Romania was made "primarily on the grounds that it would be difficult enough to carry three new candidates through Congress, and impossible to carry five."[354] President Clinton modified his demands in anticipation of Congressional opposition, further strengthening the argument that American multilateralism often relies on Congress. Whether Congress was guided by American interests, political intrigue, or some other issue, the modifications made by the executive in an effort to appease Congress and to get the treaty ratified confirmed at least two things. Firstly, Congress had again become involved in foreign policy decision-making after the Cold War; its input and, more importantly, its passive consent could not be relied upon to ratify legislation. Secondly, the argument that the US should adopt "multilateralism for multilateralism's sake" was not particularly persuasive in Congress. Congress proved it was largely impervious to world public opinion, and would act in a

---

[352] Herrick, *Issues in American Foreign Policy*, 119.
[353] David M. Malone, email message to author, April 5, 2005.
[354] Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 358.

unilateral fashion when it was deemed in its interest to do so.

While Congress' willingness to delay and modify international treaties contributed to the US' unilateral tendencies, it was a third tactic, its willingness to reject international treaties that demonstrated Congress' influence in determining the extent of the US' commitment to multilateralism. In 1996 President Clinton was the first leader to sign the historic Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a treaty that would ban all forms of nuclear testing, calling it "the longest-sought, hardest-fought prize in arms control history."[355] The culmination of two years of US-lead negotiations witnessed over ninety states joining the US in signing the treaty, "including all of the then-declared nuclear powers (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States)" (sic).[356] However, despite the apparent conciliatory position adopted by President Clinton, and after years of attempting to stall the tabling of the CTBT, the US Senate voted to reject the treaty in November 1999, with fifty-one Republicans voting against.[357] This defeat, while certainly not the first in US history, drew attention to the effect American domestic institutions could have on America's commitment to multilateralism.

The end of the Cold War emphasized the lack of any clearly established international threat that could unite the entire state – its people and politicians – as the Second World War and the Soviets had done years earlier. It has often been noted that war tends to unite a state, and peace divide it; the lack of any identifiable threat divided the US government branches and brought partisan politics back to the forefront, often at the expense of multilateralism. The separation of powers enacted by America's Founding Fathers has invited a struggle. As Moravcsik notes, "all other things being equal, the greater the number of 'veto players,'...the more difficult it is for a national government to accept international obligations."[358] Few states have been so strategically positioned to obstruct multilateralism as has the United States, and for either good or ill, this structural basis of the American political system is a key causal factor

---

[355] Bajpai, "U.S. Nonproliferation Policy After the Cold War," 228.
[356] Wittkopf et al., *American Foreign Policy,* 104-105.
[357] Cerniello, "Senate Rejects Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty," http://www.armscontrol.org/act/1999_09-10/ctbso99.asp.
[358] Moravcsik, "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?," 358.

in explaining the US' tendency toward unilateralism.

Exceptionalism as Political Culture

The fifth and final determinant of the recent resurgence of US unilateralism lies in its singular political culture. Ultimately, a state's political culture "reflects shared attitudes, beliefs, or world views that are so deeply ingrained and closely held that they have the potential to shape foreign policy decisively."[359] While difficult to quantify, the effects and consequences of political culture on a state's foreign conduct are indisputable. In fact, no factor may have had a larger impact on the American foreign policy dialogue in general, and the historical preference of unilateralism, than that of American exceptionalism.

"American exceptionalism,"[360] a term popularized by Max Lerner, "refers to a pervasive faith in the uniqueness, immutability, and superiority of the country's founding liberal principles, accompanied by a conviction that the United States has a special destiny among nations."[361] This widely held view amongst a number of American foreign policy scholars regarding the US superiority arises from two notions; firstly, the US was founded on enlightened principles – individual rights, anti-statism, democracy, the rule of law and human betterment through human action – and secondly, the US system of governance was superior to all others in democratic terms. While US exceptionalism is not a recent development, its resurgence in the foreign policy dialogue is certainly salient.[362] The roots of American exceptionalism lay in the revolutionary heritage of the United States. The Founding Fathers and the colonists that emigrated from Europe believed that the new Republic was a holy land, separated from the Old World and destined to be different than all other states before it. Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop, in 1630, echoed this sentiment, calling the United States, a "Citty upon a Hill," and one "[with] the eies of all people are uppon

---

[359] Foot, MacFarlane and Mastanduno, "Introduction," 10.
[360] Lerner, *America as a Civilization*.
[361] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 7.
[362] Johnstone, "US-UN Relations after Iraq," 817.

us."[363] Moreover, Americans began to believe "that by advancing their own interest they advance the interest of humanity. As Benjamin Franklin put it, America's 'cause is the cause of all mankind.'"[364]

What factors led to this view of exceptionalism? "One obvious way in which the thirteen colonies were special was geographical."[365] Whereas many European states were in direct conflict over land claims, the Union had an abundance of possibilities for expansion. It was more than the quantity of land available that reinforced claims of divine intervention it was also the quality of land. In a world dominated by agrarian production and an economy dependent upon agriculture, the fact the US was extremely fertile seemed to many be an omen from God, since free fertile land had been scarce in Europe. Moreover, from a physical perspective, the separation of the United States from Europe by a vast ocean seemed to further imply the US' exceptional character.

The second factor which contributed to US exceptionalism sentiment was demographic. The United States population was a combination of various races, ethnicities, nationalities, and religions; the only common-link between them all was their motivation – freedom. Ultimately, these immigrants and children of immigrants "braved the North Atlantic crossing and the North American wilderness in hopes of opportunity and a freer, more just society."[366] No other state had been created in such a way, and as a result, the desire for freedom and liberty, a gift of God for many during America's founding, has become such an influential strand in American foreign policy thinking.

A third "exceptional" characteristic, differentiating Old World Europe from New World America, concerns morality. The US' rejection of power politics, monarchism, and imperialism in favor of pacifism, idealism, and the reliance on moral persuasion set it apart from Europe.[367] While the British, Dutch, and French engaged in rampant colonialism in Asia, the Americas, and

---

[363] John Winthrop as cited by Paterson, *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy,* 29.
[364] Kagan, *Paradise and Power,* 88.
[365] McDougal, *Promised Land, Crusader State,* 16.
[366] Ibid.
[367] Ibid., 20.

Africa, the United States remained relatively removed from such practices.[368] Moreover, the United States was years ahead in its recognition of human rights. The US Constitution, and specifically the First Amendment, was one of the first state documents to recognize the need for the protection of basic human rights such as the right of nondiscrimination based on race.

A forth and final distinguishing characteristic is one of politics. "Thanks to their charters and isolation, the colonists took for granted a measure of self-government greater than that enjoyed by any province in Europe."[369] Americans grew accustomed to freedom of action and running their own domestic matters, a preference they have continued through their history, rejecting international legal restraints more fervently than most. Moreover, what also made the US domestic political structure uniquely different from between it and most other states was its separation of powers. By dividing the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the US government and establishing a system of checks and balances, the US system was designed to ensure no one branch could control the state and abuse its power, as happen so often elsewhere.

While the roots of American exceptionalism originated with its creation, the lapse of over three hundred years has done little to reduce the effect of exceptionalism on the United States. In fact, US exceptionalist sentiment has increasingly impacted post-Cold War foreign policy. Journalists, intellectuals, politicians and the general American populace today still see their state as exemplary – "a beacon for other nations (indeed, the validity of the country's liberal principles derives from their presumed universality). This sense of national mission has long influenced U.S. foreign policy goals and the style of U.S. global engagement."[370] Such an outlook can lead America down one of three foreign policy paths. Exceptionalism can lead America toward the goal of remaking the international community in the US' image, potentially leaning

---

[368] There have been noticeable exceptions, the most obvious being the war against Mexico (1848) annexation of the Philippine islands (1898-1899), both of which pale in comparison to the imperialism
displayed by most European states at this time.
[369] McDougal, *Promised Land, Crusader State,* 16.
[370] Patrick, "Multilateralism and Its Discontents," 7.

towards the support of multilateral engagement. "By sponsoring and leading multilateral institutions, the nation might transform an anarchic, conflict-prone world into an open, universal community under law, in which countries could pursue common security, prosperity, and welfare."[371]

On the other hand, the American belief in a messianic mission can encourage a "go it alone" impulse. Exceptionalism can arouse "a countervailing determination to preserve the unique values and institutions of the United States from corruption or dilution by foreign contact and a vigilance to defend U.S. national interests, sovereignty and freedom of action against infringement by global rules and supranational bodies."[372] Essentially, the belief that the US differs fundamentally from other states – due to its immense power (military, economic, and cultural) and unique political system – seems to validate desires to exempt it from the same international legality all other states are expected to follow. This unilateral drive can ultimately lead to what Harold Hongju Koh calls the "most problematic face of American exceptionalism" – the promotion of double standards, or the belief that the United States should not be held to the same rules as other states.[373] As American historian Margaret MacMillan succinctly puts it: "American exceptionalism has always had two sides: the one eager to set the world to rights, the other ready to turn its back with contempt if its message should be ignored."[374]

A third and final expression of political exceptionalism is a hybrid, combining both multilateral and unilateral elements. Under the current Bush administration the appointments of both John Bolton as US ambassador to the United Nations and Paul Wolfowitz as president of the World Bank, two individuals who have made it public their distrust of multilateralism generally, and international institutions specifically, seem to underscore the amalgamation of both strands of exceptionalism. As Martin Jacques argues, the United States on the one hand has "deployed a unilateralist policy of preemptive strikes and regime

---

[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid., 8.
[373] Koh, "On American Exceptionalism," 1485.
[374] MacMillian as cited in Koh, "On American Exceptionalism," 1480.

change as part of a wider attempt to remake the region,"[375] while at the same time campaigning for the use of the multilateral six-party talks in dealing with North Korea's nuclear program. While exceptionalism can develop into this hybrid form, one element usually proves to be the more dominant of the two, and throughout the contemporary period, unilateralism has proven to be the more dominant strand.

Throughout the post-Cold War era US foreign policy has become progressively more influenced by exceptionalism, an exceptionalism that has expressed itself in the unilateral variant. In a number of instances, high-ranking political officials have drawn on this tradition in speeches. During the run-up to the confrontation in Kosovo, for example, Secretary of State Madeline Albright argued that US leadership was indispensable: "we stand tall and we see further than other countries into the future."[376] In a more recent example, one day before his second inaugural address, President G.W. Bush focused on America's special relationship with liberty. Speaking about the US, President Bush stated: "We have a calling from beyond the stars to stand for freedom, and America will always be faithful to that cause."[377] Exceptionalism is not confined to words only. The emergence of the Bush Doctrine seems to best illustrate the profound impact political culture has on US foreign policy, and the resulting double standard that arises.

President Bush's advocacy of American preemption, and this nation's unquestioned ability to do so, directly conflicts with international law. Using force is sanctioned by three conditions – in self-defence, as a response to aggression, or with authorization from the United Nations Security Council. None of these conditions were present in the Second Gulf War. The US asserted it had, and remains to have, the right to defend its citizens, which includes using military force to head off an imminent attack. While a similar rationalization has been made by Israel in defence of their attacks in the West Bank and Gaza and by

---

[375] Jacques, "The neocon revolution," http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1448651,00.html.
[376] Albright as cited in Levitin, "Inside Moscow's Kosovo Muddle," 139.
[377] Bush, "Bush Thanks Military," http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050119-15.html.

state-sponsored assassinations, international law has not legitimized such acts. The fact that "the United States has properly hesitated to recognize any other country's claim to engage in forced disarmament or preemptive self-defence in the name of homeland security,"[378] while continuing to use that defence to justify its actions, illustrates that the US "feels that different rules should apply to itself than apply to the rest of the world."[379]

Imposing democracy is a second example of exceptionalism found in the Bush Doctrine. Recent examples in Afghanistan and Iraq have suggested that the US is willing to export democracy, from the top-down, whether a state wants it or not. "Yet the United States has always argued that genuine democracy must flow from the will of the people, not from military occupation."[380] The advancement of a policy of regime change stands contra to international law, but is not the only action that has drawn accusations of hypocrisy by the US government. Concerning issues of global justice, the United States has set up extralegal "rights-free" zones in Guantanamo Bay, conflicting with international precedents and the promotion around the world of the practice of international criminal adjudication. Establishing ad hoc military commissions and ignoring basic rights of those imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, two issues that have drawn international criticism over the last number of years have raised concerns regarding these apparent contradictions. It is not that the US has changed its opinion on international criminal adjudication for other countries; the US simply does not feel that the same rules should apply to it.

While it seems clear from the above examples that American unease with multilateral engagement can be partially explained by the US' singular political culture, the effect of the end of the Cold War on American political culture still remains unclear. While the debate regarding who or what was responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union continues to rage within academia,[381] most Americans believed that victory was confirmation of American superiority,

---

[378] Koh, "On American Exceptionalism," 1500.
[379] Ibid., 1486.
[380] Ibid., 1500.
[381] See for instance Hogan, *The End of the Cold War;* or Marples, *The Collapse of the Soviet Union, 1985-1991.*

morally, culturally, economically, and politically. The triumph of Western liberalism provided many Americans the added "evidence" that the United States, its values and institutions are the best yet devised; confirming, in most American's minds, that "the world needs to adapt itself to American ways rather than vice versa."[382] Moreover, the increase in nationalist sentiment further confirmed that the United States was simply different than other states, and should not, therefore, have to play by the same rules as all other states. Unilateralism was substantiated and US politicians could justify their preference, if not to the rest of the world, then at least to the American people, their electorate.

Conculsions

During the first decade and a half since the conclusion of the Cold War, the United States has increasingly retreated from multilateralism. While these findings do not suggest that the United States has rejected multilateralism outright, it has concluded that there has been a linear trend sloping in the direction of unilateralism with each subsequent president. This unilateral tendency, while certainly not exclusive to the current period, has grown consistently in both style and substance since 1988. Contrary to the popular belief, the shift towards unilateralism was neither sudden nor unexpected. From traces of unilateralism during President George H.W. Bush's intervention in Iraq, to President Clinton's sustained commitment to substantive unilateralism in his rejection of the International Criminal Court and withdrawal of troops in Somalia, to, finally, the unapologetic assertive unilateralism of President George W. Bush, expressed largely during the second Gulf War, the practice of democratic enlargement, and the rejection of the Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty, the evolution towards a unilateral foreign policy in the United States has been in motion since the fall of the Berlin wall.

Aside from the goals of clarifying the definition of multilateralism and

---

[382] Malone and Khong, "Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 14.

applying that definition consistently to US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era, this thesis has focused on explaining this relatively recent shift from Cold War multilateralism to present day unilateralism. While unilateralism has most assuredly been a prevalent characteristic of American foreign policy throughout its history, the question is, what were the factors that caused its recent revival? This essay has provided a survey of five significant underlying causes of the US retreat from multilateralism. The position of the US as the sole superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the new threats, both in character and quantity, US domestic political considerations, the transformation of traditional conceptions of multilateralism, and the role of American exceptionalism all contributed to the unilateral resurgence. Ultimately, changes that affect these factors, from the increasing asymmetries in power to the increasingly activist Congress, compounded and exacerbated the shift toward the "go it alone" approach to international relations.

Beyond these conclusions, there remains a significant question – namely, what lies ahead for America's commitment to multilateralism? Will the United States continue to pursue its interests through unilateral means unabated and undeterred by international opposition or will domestic pressure and changes in international conditions ultimately cause the US to revert to Cold War tactics? While there is no clear answer, nearly all indications appear to point toward the former being the most likely, at least for the foreseeable future. When looking solely at the five explanatory factors – international power, threats, evolution of multilateralism, domestic political structure, and American exceptionalism – multilateralism may remain as unappealing as ever for the United States.

The United States has been powerful throughout much of the twentieth century, but it was not until after the Cold War that US became the hyper-power it is considered today. The United States now "is the sole state with preeminence in every domain of power – economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological, and cultural."[383] Traditionally, American hard power arises from two sources – military and economic. Militarily, the United States remains "the

---

[383] Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," 36.

only country with both nuclear weapons and conventional forces with global reach," two facts that do not appear to be in jeopardye in the near future.[384] Economically, the US also appears to have the upper-hand. "In economic size, America's 31% share of world product (at market prices) is equal to the next four countries combined (Japan, Germany, Britain and France)."[385] Even with the constant threat of China on the horizon, which has high growth rates of 6% annually, compared to 2% in the United States, it still "will not equal the United States in income per head (measured in purchasing-power parity) until the last half of the century."[386]

A third source of power where the United States maintains its advantage comes from "intangible power resources" including culture, institutions, and ideology, also known collectively as "soft power."[387] "In terms of cultural prominence, the United Stats is far and away the number-one film and television exporter in the world."[388] US values of democracy, freedom, and economic liberalization are promoted by most of the global intergovernmental institutions, and more foreign students travel to the United States to study in American universities than anywhere else in the world. It is because of the US' leading position militarily, economically, and culturally that one can safely assume that the US will most likely remain the world's most powerful state for the foreseeable future, a fact that reinforces the above findings regarding the US' commitments toward multilateralism.

Similar trends can be seen in most of the other factors as well. The chance that multilateralism will revert to the post-World War II conceptualization is extremely unlikely. Nordic states, various European states, and Canada, states consistently labeled "multilateral," have headed up the multilateral cause and will not willingly relinquish their grip on either the definition of, or what constitutes a multilateral act. States with consistent and overt "multilateral" foreign policies gain considerable notoriety within the international system, a distinction that has

---

[384] Nye, "New Barbarians," 23.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Nye, *Paradox of American Power*, 9.
[388] Ibid.

led to the accusations that these states consistently "punch above their weight" in international status, reputation, and respect, as has been the case with Canada. However, states are not the only actors that have had a hand in determining this new multilateralism. As mentioned above, non-governmental organizations have become extremely influential in proposing new multilateral forms, tools and methods, as was seen in the cases of both the Landmines Treaty and the International Criminal Court. Attempts by either the United States or others to remedy the ills of the current state of multilateral engagement would be met with fierce opposition from both state and non-state actors alike. While this new multilateralism continues to progress rapidly and successfully, and the world is fixated on concerns of human security as opposed to state security, the likelihood of the US reverting to the less intrusive, less aggressive, and less demanding traditional conception of multilateralism is rather unlikely.

Moreover, America's current domestic political structures and processes also mitigate against future commitments toward multilateralism.[389] In addition to Congress' unenthusiastic attitude toward multilateralism, often seen as intrusive in its influence in foreign affairs, there are "structural problems" rendering the state "ill equipped to advance multilateral cooperation on global and transnational issues."[390] For example, US governmental committees that control budgets of key domestic departments, such as the Labor Department and the Department of Health and Human Services, "have from time to time limited the ability of those agencies to conduct international programs."[391] Funds for international activities or conferences are in direct competition with domestic needs, often leaving an easy choice for politicians seeking tangible benefits for their constituents and States. The belief that things may change if Congress undergoes a dramatic shift from a predominantly Republican – often seen as unilateralist – composition to a predominantly Democratic – often seen as multilateralist – may appear to provide false hope. If there is a difference (an assertion I am not overly comfortable making) between Republicans and

---

[389] Malone and Khong, "Resisting the Unilateral Impulse," 421.
[390] Lyman, "The Growing Influence of Domestic Factors," 86.
[391] Ibid., 87.

Democrats over the issue of multilateralism, it seems questionable whether this difference would be significant enough to reverse the almost two decade trend. When US national interests are jeopardized, Congress, whether composed of a majority of Republicans or Democrats, becomes primarily concerned with looking after their constituents, not the international community. And while there certainly has been "a feeling among foreign policy specialists that in recent years Congress has been less responsive to the new global agenda than to narrower special interests,"[392] there is no guarantee that this trend is not party specific. While the possibility of Congress returning the US to a more multilateral approach cannot be ruled out completely, the constraints imposed by the executive-legislative structure seem overwhelming.

American exceptionalism, or the belief that its institutions and values are superior to all alternatives, has been present since the founding of the Union and, in many cases, justifies America's "go it alone" approach in the realm of security. The belief that this ever-present component of US political culture will recede into oblivion, allowing the US to return to its commitment of multilateralism, appears, at least at the present, unrealistic. "The widespread perception of a U.S. victory in the Cold War has deepened the U.S. conviction in the superiority of liberal democracy and the free market and encouraged a U.S. determination to spread this gospel to those parts of the world that do not yet embrace this political and economic system."[393] Moreover, it is the conversion of traditionally espoused American ideals – democracy, freedom, and capitalism – into the new international political orthodoxy that has ultimately validated America's superiority complex, encouraging it to continue to construct foreign policy on such grounds.

However, while the future does indeed look bleak for multilateralism in the United States, not all factors point toward the US retaining its unilateral character. Future security threats to the United States could dramatically alter the political climate for multilateralism, in a manner similar to the Soviet threat

---

[392] Ibid., 84.
[393] Jia, "In Search of Absolute Security," 210.

mobilizing pro-multilateral forces after the Second World War. Currently, the largest threats facing the United States are non-state actors, which, strategically speaking, have not required a large multilateral coalition to counteract. There is also the possibility that new state challengers could change the means currently employed by the United States. According to former Chairman of the National Intelligence Council and former Secretary of Defense in the Clinton administration, the potential candidates include Japan, Russia, India, and a united Europe.[394] While the conventional powers could certainly pose a threat to US security concerns, there are also more unconventional states that have garnered as much, if not more, attention to strategic thinkers in the US. Syria, Iran, and North Korea, increasingly labeled "rogue states," are cited as possible security threats to both the US and its allies. That being said, the most likely potential challenger to American supremacy, according to numerous commentators, appears to be China. "Virtually every serious strategic thinker in the United States today agrees that China, if current trends continue, represents a greater potential danger in the long term than any other nation in the world."[395] With rapid advancements technologically, militarily, and culturally, China constitutes more than simply an economic threat to American primacy. Whether the next threat to the United States comes from one of the aforementioned states, or a state that has not been mentioned here, the result may not change. If a state arose that could challenge the United States directly for preeminence in the international system, the reversion to Cold-War multilateralism could be a likely strategic option for the US.

While it is not certain that the US will remain committed to unilateral engagement since any one factor could conceivably alter the status quo, what is certain is that there has been a shift away from multilateralism toward unilateralism. This is not to suggest that there is no possibility of the US returning to multilateral endeavors, instead that there are very few factors that presently exist that would necessitate a change in tactics. Unilateralism has

---

[394] Nye, *Paradox of American Power*, 22-35.
[395] Munro, "China: The Challenge of a Rising Power," 47-8.

provided some tangible benefits for the US, allowing it to remain unconstrained in a world of increasing constraints; while many may question whether the US' post-Cold War adherence to unambiguous unilateralism is actually working, the critics should not be surprised if the US remains on the unilateral course. Whether it be Nietzsche's assertion that "Above all, a living thing wants to discharge its strength – life itself is will to power…"[396] or Hobbes' "generall inclination [on] all mankind," that life is "a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death,"[397] the conclusion is the same. Unilateralism is a tool of the powerful, and until US power recedes or another state challenges its supremacy, the US will remain on this chosen course – sometimes engaging in "hard" unilateralism, while at other times "soft" unilateralism. But in the end, it is simply a difference of degree, not of substance.

[396] Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* 15.
[397] Hobbes, *Leviathan,* 70.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abiew, Francis Kofi. *The Evolution of the Doctrine and Practice of Humanitarian Intervention*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1999.

Anderson, Kenneth. "The Ottawa Convention Banning Landmines, the Role of International Non-governmental Organizations and the Idea of International Civil Society." *European Journal of International Law*, 11(1) (2000): 91-120.

Arsanjani, Mahnoush H. "The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." *American Journal of International Law*, 93(1) (1999): 22-43.

Axworthy, Lloyd. "Canada and Human Security: The Need for Leadership." *International Journal*, 52(2) (Spring 1997): 183-196.

Bajpai, Kanit. "U.S. Nonproliferation Policy After the Cold War." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone & Yuen Foong Khong, 217-247. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

Balz, Dan. "President puts onus back on Iraqi leader." *Washington Post*, March 7, 2003, A1.

Bash, Dana et al. "Sources: Bush Wants $80B more for Iraq, Afghanistan." *CNN Online*. http://www.cnn.com/2005/ALLPOLITICS/01/24/bush.war. funds/index.html.

Bass, Warren. "The Triage of Dayton." *Foreign Affairs*, 77(5) (Sept/Oct 1998): 95-109.

BBC News World Online. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/ 2870487.stm.

BBC Online. "America Withdraws from ABM Treaty." http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world /americas /1707812.stm.

Bloomberg.com. "Iraq War Cost $102 Billion through September, Pentagon Says," January 13, 2005. http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid =10000087&sid=asC2oZAGbhZE&refer= top_world_news.

Boot, Max. "Doctrine of the 'Big Enchilada.'" *The Washington Post*, October 14, 2002, A29.

Boulton, John R. "Under Secretary of State to the Conference on Disarmament."

US Department of State. http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/arms/ 02012402.htm.

Brown, Bartram S. "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the International Criminal Court." In *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement*, ed. Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, 323-344. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

Bull, Hedley. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of World Order*. London: Macmillan, 1977.

Bush, George W. "Bush Thanks Military, Guests at 'Celebration of Freedom' Concert." *White House Website*. http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/ releases/2005/ 01/20050119 15.html.

Bush, George W. *President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly. The White House Website* http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/ 20020912 1.html.

Byers, Michael and Georg Nolte, ed. *United States Hegemony and the Foundations of International Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Callahan, Patrick. *Logics of American Foreign Policy: Theories of America's World Role*. New York: Pearson Education Inc., 2004.

Caporaso, James. "International Relations Theory and Multilateralism: The Search for Foundations." In *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form*, ed. John G. Ruggie, 51-90. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Caron, David D. "Between Empire and Community: The United States and Multilateralism 2001-2003: A Mid-Term Assessment." *Berkeley Journal of International Law*, 21(3) (2003): 395-404.

Carothers, Thomas, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 82(1) (Jan/Feb 2003): 84-97.

----------. "Democracy Promotion under Clinton." *Washington Quarterly* 18(4) (Autumn 1995): 13-28.

Carter, Ralph G. "Congress and Post-Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy." In *After the End: Making US Foreign Policy in Post-Cold War Era*, ed. James M. Scott, 108-137. London: Duke University Press, 1998.

Cerniello, Craig. "Senate Rejects Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty." *Arms Control*

Association Website, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/1999_09-10/ctbso99.asp.

Chatterjee, Deen K. and Don E. Scheid, ed. *Ethics and Foreign Intervention.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Chinkin, Christine. "The State that Acts Alone: Bully, Good Samaritan or Iconoclast?" *European Journal of International Law,* 11(1) (2000): 31-42.

Claude Jr., Inis L. *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization,* 4th ed. New York: Random House, 1971.

Clement, Sophia. "The United States and NATO: Selective Approach to Multilateralism." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone & Yuen Foong Khong, 399-417. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

CNN Online. "The Unfinished War: A Decade since Desert Storm." http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS /2001/gulf.war/facts/gulfwar/.

Colombani, Jean-Marie. "Nous sommes tous Américains." *Le Monde*, September 13, 2001, A1.

Cooper, Robert. *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2003.

Cox, Michael. "International History since 1989." *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 2nd ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 111-137. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Daalder, Ivo H. and James M. Lindsay. *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy*. Washington: The Brookings Institution, 2003.

DiPrizio, Robert C. *Armed Humanitarians: U.S. Interventions from Northern Iraq to Kosovo*. London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

Dobriansky, Paula J. "Advancing Democracy." *The National Interest,* 77 (Fall 2004): 71-78.

Dobriansky, Paula J. and Thomas Carothers. "Democracy Promotion: Explaining the Bush Administration." *Foreign Affairs,* 82(3) (May/June 2003): 141-145.

Dolan, Michael and Chris Hunt. "Negotiating in the Ottawa Process: The New

Multilateralism," *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines* ed. Maxwell A. Cameron, Robert J. Lawson, and Brian W. Tomlin, 392-423. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Durch, William J., ed. *UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Ehlert, Allison. "Iraq: At the Apex of Evil." *Berkeley Journal of International Law*, 21(731) (2003): 731-770.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.

Ewing, James A. "The 1972 U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty: Cornerstone of Stability or Relic of the Cold War?" *William and Mary Law Review*, 43 (December 2001): 787818.

Federation of American Scientists. "Weapons of Mass Destruction." http://www.fas.org /nuke/control/cwc/chron.htm.

Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2004.

Foot, Rosemary, S. Neil MacFarlane, and Michael Mastanduno. "Introduction." In *US Hegemony and International Organizations*, ed. Rosemary Foot, S. Neil MacFarlane, and Michael Mastanduno, 1-22. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Foot, Rosemary. "Credibility at Stake: Domestic Supremacy in U.S. Human Rights Policy." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone & Yuen Foong Khong, 95-115. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

Freedman, Lawrence and Efraim Karsh. *The Gulf Conflict 19990-1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Freedom House. "2004 Report on Afghanistan." http://www.freedomhouse.org/ research/freeworld/ 2004/countryratings/afghanistan.htm.

Gaddis, John Lewis. *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

----------. *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

----------. *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.

Galbraith, Jean. "The Bush Administration's Response to the International Criminal Court." *Berkeley Journal of International Law*, 21(3) (2003): 683-702.

Glennon, Michael J. "Why the Security Council Failed." *Foreign Affairs* 82(3) (May/June 2003): 16-36.

Gnesotto, Nicole. "An End to Introversion." *WEU Institute for Security Studies*, 34 (July 2001).

Gordon, Michael R. "U.S. tries Defusing Allies Opposition to Missile Defense." *New York Times*, February 4, 2001, A1.

Graham, David T. and Nana K. Poku. *Migration, Globalization and Human Security.* London: Routledge, 2000.

Harvey, Frank P. *Smoke & Mirrors: Globalized Terrorism and the Illusion of Multilateral Security.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.

Herrick, Christopher. *Issues in American Foreign Policy.* New York: Longman, 2003.

Hewitson, Patricia. "Nonproliferation and Reduction of Nuclear Weapons: Risks of Weakening the Multilateral Nuclear Nonproliferation Norm." *Berkeley Journal of International Law,* 21(405) (2003): 405-494.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan.* Edited by Richard Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Hoffman, Stanley. "The United States and International Organizations." In *Eagle Rules?: Foreign Policy and American Primacy in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Robert J. Lieber, 342-52. New York: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Hogan, M. ed. *The End of the Cold War: Its Meaning and Implications.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Holloway, Steven. "U.S. Unilateralism at the UN." *Global Governance,* 6 (2000): 361-382.

Huntington, Samuel P. "The Lonely Superpower." *Foreign Affairs*, 78(2) (March/April 1999): 35-49.

Hurrell, Andrew. "Collective Security and International Order Revisited."

International Relations, 11(1) (1992): 37-55.

Ikenberry, G. John. "Is American Multilateralism in Decline?" *Perspectives on Politics* 1(3) (September 2003): 533-550.

----------. "State Power and the Institutional Bargain: America's Ambivalent Economic and Security Multilateralism." In *US Hegemony and International Organizations,* ed. Rosemary Foot, S. Neil MacFarland, & Michael Mastanduno, 49-70. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

----------. *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Jacques, Martin. "The neocon revolution: US unilateralism was a means of breaking the old order. Now it is busily building a new one." *Guardian Unlimited,* http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1448651,00.html. March 31, 2005.

Jia, Qingguo. "In Search of Absolute Security: U.S. Nuclear Policy." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy International Perspectives* ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 201-216. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2003.

Johnstone, Ian. "US-UN Relations after Iraq: The End of the World (Order) as we know it?" *European Journal of International Law,* 15(4) (2004): 813-838.

Jones, Dorothy V. *Code of Peace: Ethics and Security in the World of the Warlord States.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Kagan, Robert. *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order.* New York: Vintage Books, 2003.

Keating, Thomas F. *Canada and World Order: The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy,* 2nd ed. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Kennedy, David. "Background Noise? – The Politics Beneath Global Governance." *Harvard International Review* 21(3) (Summer 1999): 52-57.

Keohane, Robert O. "Multilateralism: An Agenda for Research." *International Journal* 45 (Autumn 1990): 731-764.

----------. After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

----------. "Reciprocity in International Relations." *International Organization*

40(1) (1986): 1-27.

Koh, Harold H. "On American Exceptionalism." *Stanford Law Review,* 55 (May 2003): 1479-1527.

----------. *The National Security Constitution: Sharing Power after the Iran Contra Affair.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Krauthammer, Charles. "A World Imagined: The Flawed Premises of Liberal Foreign Policy." *The New Republic,* March 15, 1999.

----------. "The Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War." *National Interest,* 57 (Fall 1999): 5-8.

----------. "The Unipolar Moment." *Foreign Affairs,* 70(1) (1990/91): 23-33.

----------. *Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World.* Washington: AEI Press, 2004.

Krauthammer, Charles. "The New Unilateralism." *Washington Post,* June 8 2001, A29.

Lake, David A. *Entangling Relations: American Foreign Policy in Its Century.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Latawski, Paul and Martin A. Smith. *The Kosovo Crisis and the Evolution of post-Cold War European Security.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.

Lerner, Max. *America as a Civilization.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957.

Lesch, David W., ed. *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment,* 3rd ed. Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 2003.

Levitin, Oleg. "Inside Moscow's Kosovo Muddle." *Survival,* 42(1) (Spring 2000): 130- 140.

Lewis, Ioan and James Mayall. "Somalia." In *The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations experience in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia, and Somalia* ed. James Mayall, 94-126. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Lobe, Jim. "Mahathir gets White House 'Rehabilitation.'" *Asian Times Online,* May 17, 2002. http://www.atimes.com/se-asia/DE17Ae03.html.

Luck, Edward C. *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International*

Organization 1919-1999. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1999.

Lyman, Princeton N. "The Growing Influence of Domestic Factors." In *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement*, ed. Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, 75-97. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

MacKinnon, Michael G. *The Evolution of US Peacekeeping Policy under Clinton*. London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000.

Malone, David M. Personal correspondence via email, April 5, 2005.

Malone, David M. and Yuen Foong Khong. "Resisting the Unilateral Impulse: Multilateral Engagement and the Future of U.S. Leadership." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 421-429. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

----------. "Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 1-17. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

----------. "A Decade of U.S. Unilateralism?" In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 19-38. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

Mandelbaum, Michael. "A Perfect Failure: NATO's War Against Yugoslavia." *Foreign Affairs*, 78(5) (1999): 2-8.

----------. *The Ideas that Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free-Markets in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2003.

Marples, David R. *The Collapse of the Soviet Union, 1985-1991*. New York: Pearson, 2004.

Mayall, James, ed. *The New Interventionism 1991-1994: United Nations experience in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia and Somalia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

McCausland, Jeffrey D. "The CFE Treaty: A Cold War Anachronism?" The Federation of American Scientists. http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/cfe/news/cfetrty.htm.

McDougal, Walter A. *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Mead, Walter Russell. *Power, Terror, Peace, and War: America's Grand Strategy in a World at Risk.* New York: Knopf, 2004.

----------. *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World.* New York: Knopf, 2001.

Mendelsohn, Jack. "Arms Control: The Unfinished Agenda." *Current History*, 96(609) (April 1997): 145-150.

Merrill, Dennis and Thomas G. Paterson. *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations Volume II: Since 1914,* 5th ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000.

Milbank, Dana. "At U.N., Bush is criticized over Iraq: Annan and others decry 'unilateralism.'" *Washington Post*, September, 24, 2003, A1, A24.

Mingst, Karen, A. and Margaret P. Karns. *The United Nations in the Post-Cold War Era, 2nd* ed. Boulder: Westview Press, 2000.

Moravcsik, Andrew. "Why is U.S. Human Rights Policy So Unilateralist?" In *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement,* ed. Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, 345-376. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

Munro, Ross H. "China: The Challenge of a Rising Power." In *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defence Policy*, ed. Robert Kagan and William Kristol, 47-73. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000.

New York Times. "Latest U.S.-Britain Draft of Resolution in the U.N.," Oct.2, 2002, A12.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future.* Edited by Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Judith Norman. Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Nolte, Georg. "The United States and the International Criminal Court." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives* ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 71-93. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2003.

Nye, Joseph S. "Seven Tests: Between Concert and Unilateralism." *The National Interest* 66 (Winter 2001/02): 5-13.

----------. *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go it Alone.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Paterson, Thomas G. ed. *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy, Volume 1: To 1914,* 3rd ed. Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1989.

Patrick, Stewart. "Multilateralism and Its Discontents: The Causes and Consequences of U.S. Ambivalence." In *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement,* ed. Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, 1-44. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

Pearson, Frederic S. and J. Martin Rochester. *International Relations: The Global Condition in the Twenty-First Century*, 4th ed. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1997.

Powell, Colin L. "The Administration's Position With Regard to Iraq." Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations (Sept. 19, 2002). http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/13581.htm.

Powell, Lindsey. "In Defence of Multilateralism." Paper presented, *Global Environmental Governance: the Post-Johannesburg Agenda,* Yale Center for Environmental Law, New Haven, CT, October 23-25, 2003.

Pratt, Larry and Leon H. Craig. "Iraq and Hegemony." Inroads, 14: 26-41.

Prestowitz, Clyde. *Rogue Nation: American Unilateralism and the Failure of Good Intentions*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.

Reus-Smit, Christian. *American Power and World Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.

Rice, Condoleezza. "Promoting the National Interest." *Foreign Affairs*, 79(1) (Jan/Feb.2000): 45-62.

Roberts, Adam. "The United Nations and International Security." *Survival*, 35(2) (Summer 1993): 3-30.

Rouke, John T. *International Politics on the World Stage*, 8th ed. Guilford: McGraw Hill/Dushkin, 2001.

Ruggie, John Gerard. "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution." *International Organization* 46(3) (1992): 561-598.

----------. *Winning the Peace: America and World Order in the New Era*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Sarooshi, Danesh. *The United Nations and the Development of Collective*

Security: The Delegation by the UN Security Council of its Chapter VII Powers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Scheffer, David. "The United States and the Criminal Court." *American Journal of International Law*, 93 (1) (1999): 12-22.

Schlesginger, Arthur M. "Unilateralism in Historical Perspective." *Understanding Unilateralism in American Foreign Relations*, ed. Gwyn Prins 18-29. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2003.

Scott, James M. and A. Lane Crothers. "Out of the Cold: The Post-War Context of U.S. Foreign Policy." In *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World* ed. James M. Scott, 1-25. London: Duke University Press, 1998.

Scott, James M., ed. *After the End: Making U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

Sestanovich, Stephen. "American Maximalism." *The National Interest* 79 (Spring 2005): 13-23.

Shanker, Thom. "White House Says the US is Not a Loner, Just Choosy." *New York Times*, July 31, 2001, A1.

Sloan, Stanley R. "U.S. Hegemony and Transatlantic Alliance." *Baltic Defence Review* 11(1) (2004): 21-38.

Smith, Karen E. and Margot Light ed. *Ethics and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Stepanova, Ekaterina. "The Unilateral and Multilateral Use of Force by the United States." In *Unilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: International Perspectives*, ed. David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, 181-200. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003.

Stiles, Kendall W. *Case Histories in International Politics*, 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 2002.

Taylor, Paul. "The United Nations and International Order." In *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 2nd ed. ed. John Baylis and Steve Smith, 331-355. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

The White House. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. New York: William Drenttel, 2003)

United Nations Department of Public Information. "Somalia - UNOSOM I." United Nations Website. http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unosomi.htm.

UN General Assembly and UN Security Council. *An Agenda for Peace Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping. Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the Statement Adopted by the Summit Meetings of the Security Council on 31 January 1992*, A/47/277 and S/24111, 17 June 1992.

US Press Secretary. "Statement on Haiti." (February 28, 2004). http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/20040228-2.html.

Van Oudenaren, John. "Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and Transatlantic Relations." Unpublished paper, April 2002.

----------. "Unipolar Versus Unilateral." *Policy Review* 124 (2004): 63-74.

----------. "What Is 'Multilateral'?" *Policy Review* 117 (February-March, 2003): 33-47.

von Hippel, Karin. *Democracy by Force: US Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Walker, Graham F., ed. *Independence in an Age of Empire: Assessing Unilateralism and Multilateralism*. Halifax: The Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, 2004.

Wallace, William. "U.S. Unilateralism: A European Perspective." In *Multilateralism & U.S. Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Engagement*, ed. Stewart Patrick and Shepard Forman, 141-164. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

Wheeler, Nicolas J. "Reflections on the Legality and Legitimacy of NATO'S Intervention in Kosovo." In *The Kosovo Tragedy: The Human Rights Dimensions*, ed. Ken Booth, 145-163. London: Frank Cars & Co., 2001.

Williams, Jody and Stephen Goose. "The International Campaign to Ban Landmines." In *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines*, ed. M.A. Cameron, R.J. Lawson, and B.W. Tomlin, 20-47. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Wittkopf, Eugene R. et al. *American Foreign Policy*, 6th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003.

Zakaria, Fareed. Our way: The trouble with being the world's only superpower.

The New Yorker, October 14, 2002, 72-81.